

**Factors Influencing Career Choice of  
Undergraduate Agricultural Education Graduates**

**Honors Thesis**

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Bachelor of Science Degree in the  
College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences at  
The Ohio State University

By

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The Ohio State University  
2000

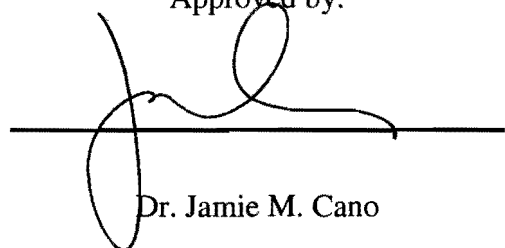
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## **DEDICATION**

This achievement is dedicated to my fiancé, Shevon Johnson. Her support and understanding was a source of drive and self-confidence for completing this project.

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## FIELDS OF STUDY

Major: Agricultural Education

Minor: Production Agriculture

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The Department of Human and Community Resource Development at The Ohio State University is known throughout the nation for the quality agricultural education graduates it produces. However, with the idea of Continuous Quality Improvement, it is important for the Department to constantly evaluate its performance in terms of graduates (Committee on the Undergraduate Experience, 1995).

In 1995, the Committee on the Undergraduate Experience, at The Ohio State University, published its final report, commonly referred to as the CUE Report. The report included recommendations for improvement of the “undergraduate experience,” a term which allowed the committee to focus on all factors in the OSU community which influenced undergraduate students. The CUE report began by establishing the realized “interrelationship of academic and nonacademic issues in shaping the education of undergraduate students” (pg. 13). An understanding of all factors affecting the undergraduate experience was necessary in order to establish a proposal for improvement of that experience. The same approach must be taken when evaluating and making proposals for improvement of the undergraduate experience for agricultural education majors.

The Committee on the Undergraduate Experience, at The Ohio State University, reported much valuable information regarding the undergraduate experience students

received at Ohio State. The study reported that 63% of students surveyed reported that it was important for campus programs and activities to meet personal needs outside of the classroom.

In the academic realm, the CUE Report cited data that indicated advising as one of the very most important aspects of the educational experience. Unfortunately, the committee found that a major problem with the General Education Curriculum (GEC) was that it seemed to be understood more in terms of input (courses) than output (what students have learned, and what they can do as a result of the GEC). Even more, the OSU poll used by the committee reported that 68% of students surveyed rated their overall academic instruction with a grade “B” or better. Focusing on career development, the CUE Report determined that approximately 80% of entering freshman in 1993, indicated that “getting a better job” was the most important factor in their decision to go to college.

In addition to the CUE report, a variety of other research articles have dealt with improvement of education and the undergraduate experience (Cano, Garton, & Raven, 1991; Messick, 1970; Rojeweski & Holder, 1990; Schmidt, 1994). Unfortunately, no data has been found specifically regarding agricultural education undergraduate experiences and its potential influence on career choice. Previous researchers have reported that student decision-making was influenced by individual attitudes, perceptions, judgments, and other personality characteristics (Hershenon & Rothem, 1966; Hilton, 1962). However, undergraduate experience factors relating to career choice are still highly hypothetical, particularly in the area of agricultural education.

It is essential to evaluate and gain feedback from the university's customers, students. The purpose of this honors project was to begin to provide feedback that could be helpful for improving the undergraduate experience for agricultural education students.

### Problem Identification and Justification

Although the Committee on the Undergraduate Experience put together an informative report including recommendations for improvement of the undergraduate experience at The Ohio State University, the committee also recognized the importance for individual evaluation of specific areas within the university, such as Agricultural Education. The committee concluded that continued efforts for improvement must involve the whole university community. Therefore, the problem was that continued efforts toward evaluation and recommendation for improvement of the undergraduate experience in agricultural education needed to be pursued.

The job market in agricultural education is enormous, with many more teaching and extension jobs available than qualified applicants. However, a large percentage of agricultural education graduates enter careers in alternative fields. Minimal data exists regarding the undergraduate experience and its relationship with agricultural education graduates' career choices. If factors of influence were realized, items of negative influence may be resolved, and any items of positive influence could be strengthened. Many possible factors in the undergraduate experience were important to understand if there was to be improvement of the agricultural education program at The Ohio State

University. Areas that were identified in the CUE Report as possible influences and which could help address the research questions included:

- Basic needs
  - Financial restrictions
  - Social involvement
- Academic experience
  - Advising
  - Curriculum issues
  - Quality of instruction

#### Purpose

The purpose of the study was to describe the experiences that influenced career choice among graduates who received a bachelor's degree in Agricultural Education at The Ohio State University.

#### Research Objectives

To guide the study, the following objectives were formulated:

1. describe the population of Agricultural Education graduates from The Ohio State University, during the years 1993 through 1999, in terms of gender, membership in 4-H and FFA, college graduation date, undergraduate cumulative grade point average, participation in undergraduate honors program, average number of credit hours taken per academic quarter, initial intended career goal within agricultural

- education, hours per week spent on campus, number of faculty known as potential references, and importance of career services as an undergraduate;
2. describe the current occupation of the 1993 to 1999, Agricultural Education graduates from The Ohio State University;
  3. describe the relationship of 4-H and FFA membership to career choice;
  4. describe the population's satisfaction with its undergraduate experience in terms of letter grade for overall academic instruction, identified personal needs least likely met by campus activities and programs, satisfaction with career services, perception of faculty advising, and interaction with faculty, staff, and administration; and,
  5. describe the relationship between satisfaction with their undergraduate experience and career choice.

#### Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, "honors program" was defined as an undergraduate experience at The Ohio State University in which participating students were expected to complete a project that resulted in the writing of a thesis.

An "academic quarter" was defined as a length of time at The Ohio State University that extended for ten weeks of classroom instruction and was completed by an additional week period for final examinations.

As evaluated in the study, "career services" included any program or technique associated with The Ohio State University that has been implemented for the purpose of assisting students in securing employment after graduation.

“4-H membership” was defined by active, dues-paying participation in local youth programs organized through a county extension office. 4-H membership included, but was not limited to, participation in junior fair exhibits displayed at a county or independent fair.

“FFA membership” was defined by active, dues-paying participation in local programs recognized as chapters within the National FFA Organization. The National FFA Organization is an organization of, by, and for students who were currently or had been enrolled in certified, secondary agricultural education programs. FFA membership can be extended for up to three years beyond a student’s high school graduation year.

#### Limitations of the Study

The study involved only Agricultural Education graduates since 1993, because these graduates’ undergraduate experience was most relevant to the current experience of undergraduate agricultural education students. The study was further limited by the number of agricultural education graduates who have maintained records of current address with The Ohio State University. Therefore, the results of the study could be generalized to only the accessible Agricultural Education graduates between 1993, and 1999.

Only one questionnaire was administered to the graduates because of suitability for the group, established validity and reliability, limited funding allocated to the project, and consideration of the time graduates would be willing to spend completing the instrument.



## Significance of the Study

The Committee on the Undergraduate Experience concluded that continued efforts for improvement must involve the whole university community. Results of the study provided necessary information for improvement and could be used to validate and improve practices used within the agricultural education program. If factors of influence were realized, items of negative influence could be resolved, and any items of positive influence could be strengthened. Many possible factors in the undergraduate experience were important to understand if there was to be improvement of the agricultural education program at The Ohio State University.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of the study was to describe the experiences that influenced career choice among graduates who received a bachelor's degree in Agricultural Education at The Ohio State University. To guide the study, the following objectives were formulated:

1. describe the population of Agricultural Education graduates from The Ohio State University, during the years 1993, through 1999, in terms of gender, membership in 4-H and FFA, college graduation date, undergraduate cumulative grade point average, participation in undergraduate honors program, average number of credit hours taken per academic quarter, initial intended career goal within agricultural education, hours per week spent on campus, number of faculty known as potential references, and importance of career services as an undergraduate;
2. describe the current occupation of the 1993, to 1999, Agricultural Education graduates from The Ohio State University;
3. describe the relationship of 4-H and FFA membership to career choice;
4. describe the population's satisfaction with its undergraduate experience in terms of letter grade for overall academic instruction, identified personal needs least likely met by campus activities and programs, satisfaction with career services, perception of faculty advising, and interaction with faculty, staff, and administration; and,

5. describe the relationship between satisfaction with their undergraduate experience and career choice.

### Characteristics of Undergraduate Students

A 1990 study of agricultural education graduates between 1975 and 1985, at the University of Florida, indicated that 32.1% of the graduates were female and 67.9% of the graduates were male. Quarterly reports from The Ohio State University, Office of the Registrar (Student Enrollment Reporting, 1999, April; 1999, January; 1998, October; 1998, August; 1998, April; 1998, January; & 1997, October), indicated that total university enrollment is approximately 50% female and 50% male (Table 2.1). When examining data collected from graduates of the College of Food, Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, & 1999), bachelor degree recipients in agricultural education during the years of 1992, through 1999, were determined to be 58.6% male and 41.4% female (Table 2.2). The student enrollment reports also indicated that the average number of credit hours taken per quarter by each undergraduate student was approximately 13 credit hours, when all quarters (including Summer Quarter) were averaged (Table 2.3). The quarter hour information was also represented in the final report of the Committee on the Undergraduate Experience (1995), which indicated that 60.6% of the students take 11 to 15 credit hours per quarter (Table 2.4).

Table 2.1 Proportion of Total Male to Female Students at The Ohio State University by Quarter and Year, According to the Office of the University Registrar

Quarter and Year	Total Male Students		Total Female Students	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Autumn 1996	27,565	50.4	27,161	49.6
Winter 1997	26,009	50.6	25,350	49.4
Spring 1997	24,909	49.8	25,139	50.2
Summer 1997	10,153	46.5	11,661	53.5
Autumn 1997	27,378	49.9	27,440	50.1
Winter 1998	26,200	50.0	26,177	50.0
Spring 1998	24,970	49.5	25,449	50.5
Summer 1998	10,052	46.1	11,770	53.9
Autumn 1998	27,323	49.5	27,910	50.5
Winter 1999	25,897	49.5	26,428	50.5
Spring 1999	25,018	49.0	26,091	51.0

Table 2.2 Gender of Agricultural Education Graduates by School Year, Autumn Quarter through Summer Quarter

Year	Male		Female	
	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
1992-1993	14	77.8	4	22.2
1993-1994	13	81.2	3	18.8
1994-1995	10	58.8	7	41.2
1995-1996	9	52.9	8	47.1
1996-1997	11	50.0	11	50.0
1997-1998	18	66.7	9	33.3
1998-1999	17	42.5	23	57.5
Total	92	58.6	65	41.4

Table 2.3 Average Credit Hours per Undergraduate Student at The Ohio State University by Quarter and Year, According to Office of the University Registrar

Quarter and Year	Credits per Undergraduate Student
Autumn 1996	14.07
Winter 1997	14.01
Spring 1997	13.79
Summer 1997	9.43
Autumn 1997	14.05
Winter 1998	14.11
Spring 1998	13.86
Summer 1998	9.54
Autumn 1998	14.12
Winter 1999	14.16
Spring 1999	13.80

Table 2.4 Credit Hours Taken per Quarter at OSU, According to CUE Report (n=312)

Credit Hours	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1-5 Hours	19	6.1	6.1
6-10 Hours	23	7.4	13.5
11-15 Hours	189	60.6	74.0
16-20 Hours	77	24.7	98.7
Over 20 Hours	4	1.3	100.0
Total	312	100.0	

The College of Food, Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, at The Ohio State University collects data from graduating seniors regarding their cumulative grade point average. According to data from Dr. Raymond A. Miller (2000), Assistant Dean for the College, the mean cumulative grade point average for 1998-1999 graduates with a Bachelor of Science degree in agricultural education is 2.96, with a standard deviation of 0.428.

According to the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences at The Ohio State University (University Honors & Scholars Center, 2000), there were approximately 41 students in the college's honors program, which was approximately 2.9% of the total student population (1400 students). A student is permitted to graduate with honors distinction with a 3.2 cumulative average, a 3.5 cumulative average in the student's particular major, and the recommendation of the Examination Committee. Mabel Freeman (2000), Director of the University Honors and Scholars Center at The Ohio State University, reported total undergraduate honors students to be approximately 4,600 (13% of the population), with about 200 students graduating with distinction each year.

Information from the CUE Report indicated that 37.9% (n=119) undergraduate students spend over 40 hours per week on campus (Table 2.5).

Table 2.5 Hours per Week Spent on Campus at OSU, According to CUE Report (n=314)

Hours	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
0 Hours	19	6.1	6.1
1-20 Hours	74	23.6	29.6
21-30 Hours	63	20.1	48.7
31-40 Hours	39	12.4	62.1
41-50 Hours	16	5.1	67.2
More Than 50 Hours	103	32.8	100.0
Total	314	100.0	

#### Career Choice of Agricultural Education Graduates

According to research done on graduates in agricultural education from the University of Florida during the period of 1975-1985, McGhee and Cheek (1990) reported that five years after graduation, 60.4% of respondents were employed as vocational agriculture teachers; 11.9% were formerly employed as vocational agriculture teachers, while 27.6% had never taught vocational agriculture. This same study (McGhee & Cheek, 1990) also reported that 76.9% of agricultural education graduates reported that their first job was as an agricultural education instructor, and 9% of the graduates indicated that their first job was in agribusiness. At the time of the McGhee and Cheek (1990) survey, 11.3% of the graduates indicated that they were employed in agribusiness.

Information from the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences, at The Ohio State University (Miller, 2000), indicated that the majority of agricultural

education graduates of Autumn Quarter 1998, through Summer Quarter 1999, known to be placed, accepted positions as high school agriculture education instructors. The Autumn Quarter 1998, through Summer Quarter 1999, placement data from the College (Miller, 2000) identified 61.8% (n=21) of the placed graduates as having been placed in positions as high school agriculture instructors, 11.8% (n=4) of the placed graduates as having been in teaching positions other than that of a high school agriculture instructor, 8.8% (n=3) of the placed graduates as having been placed in positions with an agricultural business or industry, and 5.9% (n=2) of the placed graduates as having been placed in a graduate or professional school. The remaining placed graduates accepted positions in areas other than education, agricultural business and industry, and graduate or professional school (Miller, 2000). Placement data from the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences (1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, & 1999) indicated that during Autumn Quarter 1992, through Summer Quarter 1999, 117 of the 157 graduates majoring in agricultural education were placed at the time of graduation (Table 2.6).



Table 2.6 Placement of Agricultural Education Graduates by School Year, Autumn Quarter through Summer Quarter (n=157)

Year	Total # of Grads	# Placed	# Placed in Grad/Prof School	# Seeking, Not Yet Placed	# Not Seeking	# with No Info Reported
1992-1993	18	11	3	4	0	0
1993-1994	16	14	1	1	0	0
1994-1995	17	12	5	0	0	0
1995-1996	17	15	1	0	1	0
1996-1997	22	16	4	1	1	0
1997-1998	27	19	4	1	2	1
1998-1999	40	30	2	1	2	5
Total	157	117	20	8	6	6

Recent statistics by Camp (1995) showed that only 54% of agriculture teacher education graduates entered the teaching profession in 1993, even though a shortage of agriculture teachers remained. In 1986, Birkenholz completed a five-year follow-up of bachelor degree graduates in agricultural education. Data from the Birkenholz (1986) research indicated that 34.1% of the graduates never taught, while 14.4% taught and quit, and 51.5% of the graduates were currently teaching. Some research has been done to determine reasons for teachers leaving the profession, but research done in 1998 (Author Unknown) does not indicate college inadequacies as a major reason for leaving the profession (Table 2.7).

Table 2.7 Reason for Leaving the Teaching Profession: I Received Inadequate College Preparation to Become an Effective Teacher (n=22)

Response	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
To A Great Extent	0	0.0	0.0
Somewhat	6	27.3	27.3
Very Little	7	31.8	59.1
Definitely Not	9	40.9	100.0
Total	22	100.0	

#### 4-H and FFA Membership

According to the National 4-H Web (National 4-H Youth Leadership Technology Team, 2000), there were 5,688,461 4-H youth and 76,572 4-H clubs across the United States in the year 2000. The 4-H Program, administered by the Cooperative Extension Service of the United States Department of Agriculture, state land-grant universities, and county governments, was founded to provide local educational clubs for rural youth from ages 9 to 19.

Data from the Nebraska Cooperative Extension Service (Rockwell et al, 1981) indicated that 80.6% of past 4-H members completed at least some college coursework. Of those attending an institution of higher education, 23.2% attended a four-year state college. The Nebraska study further indicated that 10.3% of the past 4-H members first entered "Education" as an educational area, and 8.7% entered "Agriculture and Natural

Resources” as an educational area. According to the research, approximately 40% of past 4-H members considered 4-H activities to influence their choice of first occupation and of subsequent occupations. Also, 44% of the respondents described 4-H activities as having influenced their choice of an area of study in an institution of higher education. Furthermore, the researchers (Rockwell et al, 1981) concluded that increased duration of 4-H membership resulted in respondents being more likely to say that 4-H activities influenced their choice of an area of study. However, in another section of the same survey only 18% of respondents said ‘4-H helped me to plan toward my occupation.’ The researchers (Rockwell et al, 1981) found that the data contrasted the Forest and Marshall (1977) data in which 63% said 4-H provided an ‘occupational benefit.’ Two (out of 315) of the study’s respondents wrote additional comments indicating that FFA participation influenced their lives more than 4-H participation.

The National FFA Organization (2000) reported that the FFA’s membership consists of 451,997 members and 7,268 chapters from all 50 states, as well as Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, and Rota. Students, aged 12-21, enrolled in agricultural education programs, are eligible for membership. Little literature was found describing a relationship between FFA membership and students who graduate with undergraduate majors in agricultural education. However, one study on influences of high school vocational agriculture, which was necessary for FFA membership, indicated that between 1982 and 1987, approximately 54% of freshmen entering the College of Agriculture, at The Ohio State University, were former vocational agriculture students (Raven & Warmbrod, 1990).

According to follow-up research on bachelor degree graduates in agricultural education at the University of Missouri-Columbia (Birkenholz, 1986), graduates who never taught responded with a mean number of years in FFA of 4.0 and a mean number of years in 4-H of 3.9. Those graduates who taught and quit reported a mean number of FFA years of 2.8 and a mean number of 4-H years of 3.5. Currently teaching graduates reported a mean of 3.5 years of FFA membership and 2.2 years of 4-H membership (Birkenholz, 1986).

#### Perception of Undergraduate Services

According to the Committee on the Undergraduate Experience Final Report (1995), 48.7% (n=153) of students agreed or strongly agreed that campus programs met personal needs (Table 2.8). However, among personal needs least met, emotional needs was cited as the least met, with 25.5% (n=77) of the undergraduates reporting emotional needs to be the most likely unmet (Table 2.9). Career needs (22.8%, n=69) and spiritual needs (20.5%, n=62) received similar rankings for being the least likely needs to be met by campus programs.

Table 2.8 Agreement with Campus Programs Meeting Personal Needs, According to the CUE Report (n=314)

Level of Agreement	Value	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	1	18	5.7	5.7
Agree	2	135	43.0	48.7
Neutral	3	119	37.9	86.6
Disagree	4	37	11.8	98.4
Strongly Disagree	5	5	1.6	100.0
Total		314	100.0	
Mean	2.605			
Standard Deviation	0.829			

Table 2.9 Personal Needs Least Met by Campus Programs, According to the CUE Report (n=302)

Personal Needs	Frequency	Valid Percent
Social Needs	51	16.9
Intellectual Needs	15	5.0
Recreational Needs	20	6.6
Emotional Needs	77	25.5
Spiritual Needs	62	20.5
Physical Needs	8	2.6
Career Needs	69	22.8
Total	302	100.0

The Committee on the Undergraduate Experience (1995) also reported statistics related to satisfaction with faculty and staff. According to the report, 58.9% (n=185) of

undergraduate students agreed that interaction with faculty was adequate (Table 2.10). Furthermore, the research indicated that 56.1% (n=176) of undergraduates agreed that interaction with staff was adequate (Table 2.11). Also, 54.2% (n=109) of the subjects rated the quality of their faculty advising as good or excellent (Table 2.12). Departmental advisors were rated slightly lower, with only 40.7% (n=125) of undergraduates in the CUE report sample rating this category of advisors with a good or better (Table 2.13). As for accessibility, 65.4% (n=151) indicated that the accessibility of faculty advisors was good or excellent (Table 2.14). A study on agricultural education graduates from the University of Florida indicated that graduates agreed that advisement was “very good” (McGhee & Cheek, 1990). One unpublished report, written in 1998 (Author Unknown), indicated that 81.8% (n=18) of past agriculture teachers with a bachelor of science degree in agricultural education from The Ohio State University were satisfied with the advising and counseling by agricultural education personnel (Table 2.15), and 68.2% (n=15) were satisfied with the advising and counseling by college personnel (Tables 2.16).

Table 2.10 Adequate Interaction with Faculty, According to CUE Report (n=314)

Response	Value	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	1	31	9.9	9.9
Agree	2	154	49.0	58.9
Neutral	3	63	20.1	79.0
Disagree	4	59	18.8	97.8
Strongly Disagree	5	7	2.2	100.0
Total		314	100.0	
Mean	2.545			
Standard Deviation	0.979			

Table 2.11 Adequate Interaction with Staff, According to CUE Report (n=314)

Response	Value	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	1	22	7.0	7.0
Agree	2	154	49.0	56.1
Neutral	3	67	21.3	77.4
Disagree	4	66	21.0	98.4
Strongly Disagree	5	5	1.6	100.0
Total		314	100.0	
Mean	2.611			
Standard Deviation	0.947			

Table 2.12 Quality Rating of Faculty Advisor, According to CUE Report (n=310)

Response	Value	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Excellent	1	59	19.0	19.0
Good	2	109	35.2	54.2
Neutral	3	41	13.2	67.4
Poor	4	19	6.1	73.5
Very Poor	5	10	3.2	76.8
Not Applicable	.	72	23.2	100.0
Total		310	100.0	
Mean	3.323			
Standard Deviation	2.221			

Table 2.13 Quality Rating of Departmental Advisor, According to CUE Report (n=307)

Response	Value	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Excellent	1	40	13.0	13.0
Good	2	85	27.7	40.7
Neutral	3	44	14.3	55.0
Poor	4	9	2.9	58.0
Very Poor	5	8	2.6	60.6
Not Applicable	.	121	39.4	100.0
Total		307	100.0	
Mean	4.121			
Standard Deviation	2.450			



Table 2.14 Rating of Faculty Advisor Accessibility, According to CUE Report (n=231)

Response	Value	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Excellent	1	39	16.9	16.9
Good	2	112	48.5	65.4
Neutral	3	43	18.6	84.0
Poor	4	29	12.6	96.5
Very Poor	5	8	3.5	100.0
Total		83	100.0	
Mean	2.372			
Standard Deviation	1.017			

Table 2.15 Satisfaction with Advising and Counseling by Agricultural Education Department Personnel, According to Unpublished Research (n=22)

Response	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very Satisfied	7	31.8	31.8
Satisfied	11	50.0	81.8
Unsatisfied	2	9.1	90.9
Very Unsatisfied	1	4.5	95.4
Never Experienced	1	4.5	100.0
Total	22	100.0	

Table 2.16 Satisfaction with Advising and Counseling by College Personnel, According to Unpublished Research (n=22)

Response	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very Satisfied	5	22.7	22.7
Satisfied	10	45.5	68.2
Unsatisfied	5	22.7	90.9
Very Unsatisfied	0	0.0	90.9
Never Experienced	2	9.1	100.0
Total	22	100.0	

In the area of career services, the CUE Report indicated that nearly one-half (45.3%, n=91) of undergraduates were “neutral” in regards to satisfaction with career planning and placement services (Table 2.17). However, 96.5% (n=302) of the respondents agreed that career planning and placement services were important (Table 2.18). The 1998 unpublished research on why agriculture teachers leave the profession indicated that 50.0% (n=11) of the graduates were satisfied with the job placement assistance received from The Ohio State University (Table 2.19).

Table 2.17 Satisfaction with Career Planning and Placement Services, According to CUE Report (n=201)

Response	Value	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very Satisfied	1	21	10.4	10.4
Satisfied	2	72	35.8	46.3
Neutral	3	91	45.3	91.5
Unsatisfied	4	15	7.5	99.0
Very Unsatisfied	5	2	1.0	100.0
Total		201	100.0	
Mean	2.527			
Standard Deviation	0.819			

Table 2.18 Importance of Career Planning and Placement Services, According to CUE Report (n=313)

Response	Value	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very Important	1	240	76.7	76.7
Somewhat Important	2	62	19.8	96.5
Neutral	3	7	2.2	98.7
Unimportant	4	3	1.0	99.7
Very Unimportant	5	1	0.3	100.0
Total		313	100.0	
Mean	1.284			
Standard Deviation	0.588			

Table 2.19 Satisfaction with Job Placement Assistance, According to Unpublished Research (n=22)

Response	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very Satisfied	0	0.0	0.0
Satisfied	11	50.0	50.0
Unsatisfied	2	9.1	59.1
Very Unsatisfied	6	27.3	86.4
Never Experienced	3	13.6	100.0
Total	22	100.0	

In regards to overall academic instruction, the Committee on the Undergraduate Experience (1995), at The Ohio State University, reported that 67.8% (n=213) of undergraduates rated their instruction as a “B” or better (Table 2.20). In terms of satisfaction with the overall undergraduate experience, one unpublished report (unknown, 1998) indicated that 90.5% (n=19) of agriculture teachers leaving the profession were satisfied with their overall undergraduate experience (Table 2.21).

Table 2.20 Letter Grade for Overall Academic Instruction at OSU, According to CUE Report (n=314)

Grade	Value	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
A	1	49	15.6	15.6
B	2	164	52.2	67.8
C	3	89	28.3	96.2
D	4	10	3.2	99.4
E	5	2	0.6	100.0
Total		314	100.0	
Mean	2.210			
Standard Deviation	0.763			

Table 2.21 Satisfaction with Overall Undergraduate Experience, According to Unpublished Research (n=21)

Response	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very Satisfied	6	28.6	28.6
Satisfied	13	61.9	90.5
Unsatisfied	2	9.5	100.0
Very Unsatisfied	0	0.0	100.0
Total	21	100.0	

## Summary

The literature reviewed provided some insight into characteristics of undergraduate students at The Ohio State University. Little information was found regarding career choice of agricultural education graduates beyond percentages of those entering the teaching field. As for 4-H and FFA membership, research from the Nebraska Cooperative Extension Service described relationships between 4-H involvement and career choice, but the data was not specific to careers in agricultural education (Rockwell et al, 1981). Unpublished research (Author Unknown, 1998) suggested that 9 out of 10 agricultural education graduates were satisfied with their overall undergraduate experience.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the study was to describe the experiences that influenced career choice among graduates who received a bachelor's degree in Agricultural Education at The Ohio State University. To guide the study, the following objectives were formulated:

1. describe the population of Agricultural Education graduates from The Ohio State University, during the years 1993, through 1999, in terms of gender, membership in 4-H and FFA, college graduation date, undergraduate cumulative grade point average, participation in undergraduate honors program, average number of credit hours taken per academic quarter, initial intended career goal within agricultural education, hours per week spent on campus, number of faculty known as potential references, and importance of career services as an undergraduate;
2. describe the current occupation of the 1993, to 1999, Agricultural Education graduates from The Ohio State University;
3. describe the relationship of 4-H and FFA membership to career choice;
4. describe the population's satisfaction with its undergraduate experience in terms of letter grade for overall academic instruction, identified personal needs least likely met by campus activities and programs, satisfaction with career services, perception of faculty advising, and interaction with faculty, staff, and administration; and,

5. describe the relationship between satisfaction with their undergraduate experience and career choice.

### Research Design

The research was descriptive correlational. Descriptive techniques were used to display the characteristics associated with the population of graduates from the undergraduate field of agricultural education. One questionnaire was used to gather data and information from the subjects.

Non-response error was the primary source of invalidity in the study. Carefully structuring and sequencing the collection of data minimized non-response error. Efforts were made to ensure that data were collected from all subjects within the population.

Sampling error was another source of invalidity. However, participants were from a purposely-selected sample and were not assumed to be representative of some larger population. Therefore, generalization of the results was limited to the participants in the study.

### Population and Sample

The target population of the study was known graduates of The Ohio State University who, during the years 1993 through 1999, received a Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Education (N=157). The population size was determined from College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences (1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, & 1999) graduate placement reports.



The sample (n=140) included those graduates within the population who have maintained current addresses with The Ohio State University. The sample was obtained through two methods. The OSU Alumni database was initially used to gather the names and addresses of subjects graduating between the years 1993, and 1998. Graduates in 1999, were not yet entered in the Alumni database, so names were taken from past Agriculture Education 530 class rosters. Addresses for the 1999 participants were taken from the current, online, OSU directory.

The responding sample was 77.1% (n=108). The questionnaires returned on or before July 28, 2000, were categorized as “early respondents” (n=78), while those questionnaires received on or after July 29, 2000, were categorized as “late respondents” (n=30). Early respondents were compared to late respondents, yielding no significant differences.

### Instrumentation

One questionnaire was developed for specific use in this study. Information obtained through the questionnaire included: gender; graduation year; cumulative grade point average (categorized); extra-curricular involvement during undergraduate experience; job entrance upon graduation; current job placement; evaluation of specific areas in the undergraduate experience; and factors leading to current job position.

The validity and reliability of the questionnaire was established before the questionnaire was administered. Validity was established by requesting evaluation of the questionnaire by several faculty and administrators within the College of Food,

Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences. The comments received from this evaluation process were used to further refine the organization and wording of the questionnaire.

In order to ensure reliability, a pilot study was administered to the 1999, Spring Quarter class of Agriculture Education 530 (n=39). Upon evaluation of the results from the pilot study, one question was determined unreliable and therefore removed from the final instrument. After removing the one unreliable question, a reliability coefficient of 0.81 was achieved.

### Data Collection

A census of all agricultural education graduates during the years 1993, through 1999, was taken; however current names and addresses were available only for 140 graduates. A questionnaire was mailed to each graduate on June 23, 1999. The mailing instructed the graduates to respond within ten (10) days. On July 9, 1999, a reminder letter was sent to all participants. The initial mailing yielded a response of 55.7% (n=78). On July 22, 1999, a second questionnaire was mailed to nonrespondents (n=62) asking them once again to respond within 10 days. The second mailing yielded a response of 48.4% (n=30). At the end of August 1999, the data was summarized, comparing the data collected from early respondents (received on or before July 28, 1999) to the data collected from late respondents (received on or after July 29, 1999). After comparing the data from section II of the questionnaire, it was determined from an independent sample t-test for equality of means that the results were similar, and therefore data from nonrespondents could also be assumed to be similar to the respondents (Miller & Smith, 1983).

## Data Analysis

The SPSS/PC+ computer software program was used for data analysis. Descriptive statistical procedures used include mean, frequencies, standard deviation, and percentages. Appropriate correlations for the level of data collected were calculated to describe relationships between selected variables. All correlations were interpreted according to Davis' (1971) conventions (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1 Conventions Used to Describe Correlations, According to Davis (1971)

Description	Coefficient
Very Strong	.70 or greater
Substantial	.50 to .69
Moderate	.30 to .49
Low	.10 to .29
Negligible	.01 to .09

## CHAPTER IV

### FINDINGS

The purpose of the study was to describe the experiences that influenced career choice among graduates who received a bachelor's degree in Agricultural Education at The Ohio State University. To guide the study, the following objectives were formulated:

1. describe the population of Agricultural Education graduates from The Ohio State University, during the years 1993, through 1999, in terms of gender, membership in 4-H and FFA, college graduation date, undergraduate cumulative grade point average, participation in undergraduate honors program, average number of credit hours taken per academic quarter, initial intended career goal within agricultural education, hours per week spent on campus, number of faculty known as potential references, and importance of career services as an undergraduate;
2. describe the current occupation of the 1993, to 1999, Agricultural Education graduates from The Ohio State University;
3. describe the relationship of 4-H and FFA membership to career choice;
4. describe the population's satisfaction with its undergraduate experience in terms of letter grade for overall academic instruction, identified personal needs least likely met by campus activities and programs, satisfaction with career services, perception of faculty advising, and interaction with faculty, staff, and administration; and,

5. describe the relationship between satisfaction with their undergraduate experience and career choice.

#### Sample Characteristics

The responding sample consisted of one hundred eight (n=108) 1993-1999 agricultural education graduates from The Ohio State University. The gender of the graduates was 42.6% (n=46) female and 57.4% (n=62) male. While years of membership varied (Table 4.1), 88% (n=95) of the graduates were members of 4-H. Years of membership in FFA also varied (Table 4.2), with 74.1% (n=80) of respondents claiming membership in the organization.

Table 4.1 Number of Years of Membership in 4-H (n=95)

Number of years	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	1	1.1	1.1
2	1	1.1	2.2
4	4	4.2	6.3
6	8	8.4	14.7
7	4	4.2	18.9
8	5	5.3	24.2
9	13	13.7	37.9
10	27	28.4	66.3
11	26	27.4	93.7
12	5	5.3	98.9
15	1	1.1	100.0
Total	95	100.0	
Mean	9.29		
Standard Deviation	2.33		

Table 4.2 Number of Years of Membership in FFA (n=80)

Number of years	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	4	5.0	5.0
2	3	3.8	8.8
3	4	5.0	13.8
4	41	51.3	65.0
5	9	11.3	76.3
6	10	12.5	88.8
7	9	11.3	100.0
Total	80	100.0	
Mean	4.43		
Standard Deviation	1.46		

The college graduation date of the subjects ranged from 1993 to 1999 (Table 4.3). Upon graduation from The Ohio State University, 25% (n=27) of the graduates had a 3.30 cumulative grade point average (CGPA), or above (Table 4.4). Less than 8% (n=8) were members of the honors program upon graduation from The Ohio State University. The majority (59.3%, n=64) of graduates averaged 15-18 credit hours per quarter (Table 4.5).

Table 4.3 College Graduation Year (n=108)

Year	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1993	14	13.0	13.0
1994	4	3.7	16.7
1995	13	12.0	28.7
1996	10	9.3	38.0
1997	13	12.0	50.0
1998	31	28.7	78.7
1999	23	21.3	100.0
Total	108	100.0	

Table 4.4 Cumulative Grade Point Average Upon Graduation from The Ohio State University (n=108)

GPA Range	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
2.00-2.29	3	2.8	2.8
2.30-2.69	25	23.1	25.9
2.70-2.99	23	21.3	47.2
3.00-3.29	30	27.8	75.0
3.30-3.69	24	22.2	97.2
3.70-4.00	3	2.8	100.0
Total	108	100.0	
Mode	3.00-3.29		



Table 4.5 Average Number of Credit Hours Taken per Quarter (n=108)

Credit Hours	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Less than 9	2	1.9	1.9
9-11	8	7.4	9.3
12-15	78	72.2	81.5
16-18	19	17.6	99.1
19 or more	1	.9	100.0
Total	108	100.0	
Mode	12-15		

On average, the graduates reported their time spent on campus to be 31-40 hours per week (Table 4.6). The number of faculty known for a possible recommendation varied from the respondent's time as an undergraduate (Table 4.7) to the respondent's time at the point of survey (Table 4.8). When asked about the importance of career services, 40.7% (n=44) of the graduates indicated that career services were important, while only 16.7% (n=18) indicated that career services were very important (Table 4.9).

Table 4.6 Number of Hours Spent on Campus, Including Class Time (n=108)

Hours	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1-10	1	.9	.9
11-20	13	12.0	13.0
21-30	30	27.8	40.7
31-40	25	23.1	63.9
41-50	17	15.7	79.6
50+	22	20.4	100.0
Total	108	100	
Mode	21-30		

Table 4.7 As an Undergraduate, Number of Faculty Known for a Potential Reference (n=108)

Number of Faculty	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
0	5	4.6	4.6
1	1	0.9	5.6
2	17	15.7	21.3
3	19	17.6	38.9
4	17	15.7	54.6
5	14	13.0	67.6
6	7	6.5	74.1
7	5	4.6	78.7
8	2	1.9	80.6
9 or more	21	19.4	100.0
Total	108	100.0	

Table 4.8 At Time of Survey, Number of Faculty Known for a Potential Reference (n=108)

Number of Faculty	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
0	15	13.9	13.9
1	5	4.6	18.5
2	22	20.4	38.9
3	17	15.7	54.6
4	15	13.9	68.5
5	9	8.3	76.9
6	8	7.4	84.3
7	3	2.8	87.0
8	0	0.0	87.0
9 or more	14	13.0	100.0
Total	108	100.0	

Table 4.9 Overall Importance of Career Services, as an Undergraduate (n=108)

Importance Level	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very Important	18	16.7	16.7
Important	44	40.7	57.4
Unimportant	39	36.1	93.5
Very Unimportant	7	6.5	100.0
Total	108	100.0	

### Career Choice of Agricultural Education Graduates

Upon declaring a major in agricultural education, 72.9% (n=78) of the respondents intended their career goal to be in the area of high school agricultural education, while 19.6% (n=21) expected their career goal to be in the area of extension (Table 4.10). Only 7.5% (n=8) intended their career goal to be with an agricultural business or industry.

Table 4.10 Initial Intended Career Goal within Agricultural Education (n=107)

Career Goal	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
High School Agriculture Instructor	78	72.9	72.9
Extension Agent	21	19.5	92.5
Agricultural Business/Industry	8	7.5	100.0
Total	107	100.0	

At the time the questionnaire was administered, summer 1999, a majority of graduates had jobs in high school agricultural education. Full-time graduate students made up 2.9% (n=3) of the sample; 13.9% (n=15) of the respondents were working in agricultural business/industry; 4.6% (n=5) of the graduates claimed titles as extension agents; and, 49.1% (n=53) of the graduates were high school agriculture instructors (Table 4.11). A percentage of the respondents, 29.6% (n=32), indicated that they were working in jobs other than the above stated categories. Occupations listed in the “Other”

category were widely varied, but two significant categories could be extracted from the jobs listed: 3.7% (n=4) indicated an occupation in public education that is not in the specific area of high school agriculture instructor; and, 1.9% (n=2) indicated an occupation within extension that could not be described as extension agent.

Table 4.11 Current Occupation of the 1993 to 1999, Agricultural Education Graduates (n=108)

Occupation	Frequency	Valid Percent
High School Agriculture Instructor	53	49.1
Extension Agent	5	4.6
Agricultural Business/Industry	15	13.9
Full-Time Graduate Student	3	2.8
Other	32	29.6
Total	108	100.0

When evaluating the relationship of 4-H and FFA to career choice, it was determined that there was a low relationship between 4-H membership and career choice and a moderate relationship between FFA membership and career choice (Table 4.12). Of those graduates who were currently in careers as extension agents, 100% (n=5) were members of 4-H, and all who were currently enrolled as full-time graduate students were members of 4-H (Table 4.13).

Table 4.12 Current Occupation Correlation to 4-H and FFA Membership (n=108)

	4-H Membership (Cramer's V)	FFA Membership (Cramer's V)
Occupation	.179	.480

Table 4.13 Current Occupation Cross Tabulation with Membership in 4-H (n=108)

Occupation	Frequency of 4-H Membership	Valid Percent of 4-H Membership
High School Agriculture Instructor	45	84.9
Extension Agent	5	100.0
Agricultural Business/Industry	12	80.0
Full-Time Graduate Student	3	100.0
Other	30	93.8
Total	95	88.0

Of more significance, a moderate relationship (Cramer's V = .326) was observed between number of years in 4-H and the graduates' current occupations. Of those graduates who were currently in careers as extension agents, 100% (n=5) were members of 4-H for at least six years, and 100% of those who were currently enrolled as full-time graduates student were members of 4-H for at least seven years (Table 4.14).

Table 4.14 Years of 4-H Membership Cross Tabulation with Current Occupation (n=95)

Years in 4-H	Current Occupation									
	High School Agriculture Instructor		Extension Agent		Agricultural Business/ Industry		Full-Time Graduate Student		Other	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
15	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	3.3
14	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
13	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
12	4	8.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	3.3
11	12	26.7	1	20.0	2	16.7	1	33.3	10	33.3
10	14	31.1	1	20.0	4	33.3	0	0.0	8	26.7
9	6	13.3	0	0.0	4	33.3	1	33.3	2	6.7
8	1	2.2	1	20.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	10.0
7	2	4.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	33.3	1	3.3
6	3	6.7	2	40.0	1	8.3	0	0.0	2	6.7
5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
4	2	4.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	6.7
3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
2	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	8.3	0	0.0	0	0.0
1	1	2.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	45	100.0	5	100.0	12	100.0	3	100.0	30	100.0

In the area of FFA membership, 61.3% (n=49) of those who were FFA members were currently holding careers as high school agriculture instructors, while 57.1% (n=16) of those who were not FFA members were currently engaged in occupations other than a high school agriculture instructor, extension agent, agricultural business/industry, and full-time graduate student (Table 4.15).

Table 4.15 Current Occupation Cross Tabulation with Membership in FFA (n=108)

Occupation	Frequency of FFA Membership	Valid Percent of FFA Membership
High School Agriculture Instructor	49	92.5
Extension Agent	2	40.0
Agricultural Business/Industry	12	80.0
Full-Time Graduate Student	1	33.3
Other	16	50.0
Total	80	74.1

A low relationship (Cramer's  $V = .257$ ) was observed between number of years in FFA and the graduates' current occupations. Of those who were currently in careers as high school agriculture instructors, 91.8% (n=45) of those enrolled in the FFA maintained FFA membership for at least four years, with 38.6% (n=19) maintaining FFA membership beyond four years (Table 4.16).



Table 4.16 Years of FFA Membership Cross Tabulation with Current Occupation  
(n=80)

Years in FFA	Current Occupation									
	High School Agriculture Instructor		Extension Agent		Agricultural Business/ Industry		Full-Time Graduate Student		Other	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
7	8	16.3	0	0.0	1	8.3	0	0.0	0	0.0
6	6	12.2	0	0.0	1	8.3	0	0.0	3	18.8
5	5	10.2	0	0.0	1	8.3	0	0.0	3	18.8
4	26	53.1	2	100.0	5	41.7	1	100.0	7	43.8
3	2	4.1	0	0.0	1	8.3	0	0.0	1	6.3
2	2	4.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	6.3
1	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	25.0	0	0.0	1	6.3
Total	49	100.0	2	100.0	12	100.0	1	100.0	16	100.0

When evaluating the population’s satisfaction with its undergraduate experience, several observations were made. When questioned about what letter grade they would assign for their overall academic instruction at The Ohio State University, 70.4% (n=76) rated the instruction with a “B” or better letter grade (Table 4.17). In regards to personal needs least likely to be met by campus activities and programs, 45.3% (n=43) indicated that career needs were among the least likely met (Table 4.18). However, 69.4% (n=59) of those using career services rated satisfaction with career services as satisfied or very satisfied (Table 4.19).

Table 4.17 Letter Grade for Overall Academic Instruction at OSU (n=108)

Grade	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
A	7	6.5	6.5
A-	9	8.3	14.8
B+	28	25.9	40.7
B	32	29.6	70.4
B-	7	13.0	83.3
C+	7	6.5	89.8
C	9	8.3	98.1
C-	0	0.0	98.1
D+	0	0.0	98.1
D	2	1.9	98.1
E	0	0.0	100.0
Total	108	100.0	100.0

Table 4.18 Personal Needs Least Likely Met by Campus Programs and Activities (n=95)

Personal Need	Frequency	Valid Percent
Social Needs	14	14.7
Intellectual Needs	20	21.1
Recreational Needs	13	13.7
Emotional Needs	23	24.2
Spiritual Needs	37	38.9
Physical Needs	10	10.5
Career Needs	43	45.3

Table 4.19 Overall Satisfaction with Career Services (n=85)

Level of Satisfaction	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very Satisfied	3	3.5	3.5
Satisfied	56	65.9	69.4
Unsatisfied	21	24.7	94.1
Very Unsatisfied	5	5.9	100.0
Total	85	100.0	

As for overall perception of faculty advising, 74.5% (n=79) of those responding indicated that their faculty advising was good or excellent (Table 4.20). When evaluating interaction with faculty, staff, and administration, 87.0% (n=94) agreed or strongly agreed that interaction was adequate (Table 4.21).

Table 4.20 Overall Perception of Faculty Advising (n=106)

Perception	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Excellent	31	29.2	29.2
Good	48	45.3	74.5
Poor	17	16.0	90.6
Very Poor	10	9.4	100.0
Total	106	100.0	

Table 4.21 Adequate Interaction with Faculty, Staff, and Administration (n=108)

Response	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	32	29.6	29.6
Agree	62	57.4	87.0
Disagree	13	12.0	99.1
Strongly Disagree	1	.9	100.0
Total	108	100.0	

When examining the correlation between current occupation and letter grade for overall academic instruction at The Ohio State University, a low relationship (Cramer's  $V = .237$ ) was observed. Little significance was observed when examining detailed results of the cross tabulation (Table 4.22). Among personal needs least likely met by campus programs and activities, a moderate relationship (Cramer's  $V = .306$ ) was observed between current occupation and those who identified recreational needs as one of those areas least likely met (Table 4.23). All other personal needs displayed a low or negligible relationship to career choice (Table 4.24). As for overall satisfaction with career services, a low relationship was observed (Cramer's  $V = .239$ ), with varying scores in each area (Table 4.25). A low relationship (Cramer's  $V = .253$ ) was also observed in the cross tabulation between current occupation and overall perception of faculty advising (Table 4.26). The cross tabulation between current occupation and adequacy of interaction with faculty, staff, and administration yielded a low relationship (Cramer's  $V = .176$ ) (Table 4.27).

Table 4.22 Letter Grade for Overall Academic Instruction Cross Tabulation with Career Choice (n=108)

Letter Grade	Current Occupation									
	High School		Extension		Agricultural		Full-Time		Other	
	Agriculture Instructor		Agent		Business/ Industry		Graduate Student			
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
A	5	9.4	1	20.0	0	0.0	1	33.3	0	0.0
A-	2	3.8	0	0.0	2	13.3	1	33.3	4	12.5
B+	15	28.3	2	40.0	3	20.0	1	33.3	7	21.9
B	12	22.6	2	40.0	6	40.0	0	0.0	12	37.5
B-	9	17.0	0	0.0	1	6.7	0	0.0	4	12.5
C+	3	5.7	0	0.0	1	6.7	0	0.0	3	9.4
C	6	11.3	0	0.0	2	13.3	0	0.0	1	3.1
C-	0	0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
D+	0	0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
D	1	1.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	3.1
E	0	0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	53	100.0	5	100.0	15	100.0	3	100.0	32	100.0

Table 4.23 Current Occupation Cross Tabulation Recreational Needs as a Personal Need Least Likely Met by Campus Programs and Activities (n=95)

Occupation	Frequency of Recreation Least Likely Met	Valid Percent of Recreation Least Likely Me
High School Agriculture Instructor	4	8.3
Extension Agent	0	0.0
Agricultural Business/Industry	5	38.5
Full-Time Graduate Student	0	0.0
Other	4	14.3
Total	13	13.7

Table 4.24 Current Occupation Correlation to Personal Needs Least Likely Met by Campus Activities and Programs (n=95)

Personal Need	Correlation to Occupation (Cramer's V)
Career Needs	.158
Physical Needs	.211
Spiritual Needs	.255
Emotional Needs	.281
Recreational Needs	.306
Intellectual Needs	.157
Social Needs	.191

Table 4.25 Current Occupation Cross Tabulation with Overall Satisfaction of Career Services.

Satisfaction Level	Current Occupation									
	High School		Extension		Agricultural		Full-Time		Other	
	Agriculture Instructor		Agent		Business/ Industry		Graduate Student			
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Very	2	5.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	33.3	0	0.0
Un-	27	71.1	3	75.0	7	58.3	1	33.3	18	64.3
Satisfied	7	18.4	1	25.0	5	41.7	1	33.3	7	25.0
Very Un-	2	5.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	10.7
Total	38	100	4	100	12	100	3	100	28	100

Table 4.26 Current Occupation Cross Tabulation with Overall Perception of Faculty Advising (n=106)

Satisfaction Level	Current Occupation									
	High School		Extension		Agricultural		Full-Time		Other	
	Agriculture Instructor		Agent		Business/ Industry		Graduate Student			
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Excellent	14	26.9	2	40.0	6	40.0	2	100	7	21.9
Good	29	55.8	3	60.0	2	13.3	0	0.0	14	43.8
Poor	6	11.5	0	0.0	3	20.0	0	0.0	8	25.0
Very Poor	3	5.8	0	0.0	4	26.7	0	0.0	3	9.4
Total	52	100	5	100	15	100	2	100	32	100

Table 4.27 Current Occupation Cross Tabulation with Adequacy of Interaction with Faculty, Staff, and Administration (n=108)

Interaction was	Current Occupation									
	High School		Extension		Agricultural		Full-Time		Other	
	Agriculture Instructor		Agent		Business/ Industry		Graduate Student			
Adequate	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Strongly Agree	15	28.3	2	40.0	5	33.3	1	33.3	9	28.1
Agree	30	56.6	3	60.0	6	40.0	2	66.7	21	65.6
Disagree	8	15.1	0	0.0	4	26.7	0	0.0	1	3.1
Strongly Dis-	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	3.1
Total	53	100	5	100	15	100	3	100	32	100



## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of the study was to describe the experiences that influenced career choice among graduates who received a bachelor's degree in Agricultural Education at The Ohio State University. To guide the study, the following objectives were formulated:

1. describe the population of Agricultural Education graduates from The Ohio State University, during the years 1993, through 1999, in terms of gender, membership in 4-H and FFA, college graduation date, undergraduate cumulative grade point average, participation in undergraduate honors program, average number of credit hours taken per quarter, initial intended career goal within agricultural education, hours per week spent on campus, number of faculty known as potential references, and importance of career services as an undergraduate;
2. describe the current occupation of the 1993, to 1999, Agricultural Education graduates from The Ohio State University;
3. describe the relationship of 4-H and FFA membership to career choice;
4. describe the population's satisfaction with its undergraduate experience in terms of letter grade for overall academic instruction, identified personal needs least likely met by campus activities and programs, satisfaction with career services, perception of faculty advising, and interaction with faculty, staff, and administration; and,

5. describe the relationship between satisfaction with their undergraduate experience and career choice.

### Research Design

A descriptive-correlational research design was utilized to meet the objectives of the study. The instrument used to gather data and information was a questionnaire developed specifically for the use of this project.

### Population and Sample

The target population of the study was known graduates of The Ohio State University who, during the years 1993, through 1999, received a Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Education (N=157). The population size was determined from College of Food, Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, & 1999) graduate placement reports.

The sample (n=140) included those graduates within the population who have maintained current addresses with The Ohio State University. The sample was obtained through two methods. The OSU Alumni database was initially used to gather the names and addresses of subjects graduating between the years 1993 and 1998. Graduates in 1999 were not yet entered in the database, so names were taken from past Agriculture Education 530 class rosters. Addresses for the 1999 participants were taken from the current, online OSU directory.

The responding sample was 77.1% (n=108). The questionnaires returned on or before July 28, 2000, were categorized as “early respondents” (n=78), while those

questionnaires received on or after July 29, 2000, were categorized as “late respondents” (n=30). Early respondents were compared to late respondents, yielding no significant differences.

### Instrumentation and Data Collection

One questionnaire was developed for specific use in this study. Information obtained through the questionnaire included: gender; graduation year; cumulative grade point average (categorized); extra-curricular involvement; job entrance upon graduation; current job placement; and, evaluation of specific areas in the undergraduate experience.

The validity and reliability of the questionnaire was established before the questionnaire was administered. Validity was established by requesting evaluation of the questionnaire by several faculty and administrators within the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences. The comments received from this evaluation process were used to further refine the organization and wording of the questionnaire.

In order to ensure reliability, a pilot study was administered to the 1999, Spring Quarter class of Agriculture Education 530 (n=39). After removing the one unreliable question, a reliability coefficient of 0.81 was achieved.

A census of all agricultural education graduates during the years 1993, through 1999, was taken. Current addresses were established, and a questionnaire was mailed to each graduate. The mailing instructed the graduates to respond within ten (10) days. The initial mailing yielded a response of 55.7% (n=78). A second questionnaire was mailed to nonrespondents (n=62) asking them once again to respond within 10 days. The second mailing yielded a response of 48.4% (n=30). After sufficient time elapsed, the data was

summarized, comparing the data collected from early respondents to the data collected from late respondents. After comparing these two data sets, it was determined that the results were similar, and therefore data from nonrespondents could also be assumed to be similar to the respondents (Miller & Smith, 1983).

### Data Analysis

The SPSS/PC+ computer software program was used for data analysis. Descriptive statistical procedures used include mean, frequencies, standard deviation, and percentages. Appropriate correlations for the level of data collected were calculated to describe relationships between selected variables. All correlations were interpreted according to Davis' (1971) conventions (Table 3.1).

### Conclusions

#### Population Characteristics

Graduates between 1993 and 1999, with a bachelor's degree in agricultural education from The Ohio State University were approximately one-half male and one-half female. A majority of the graduates were involved in 4-H and/or FFA, with many of the graduates having continued years of membership to near the maximum length.

Over one-half (52.8%) of the graduates graduated with a cumulative grade point average of 3.00 or above. Few of the graduates (7.4%) completed membership in the undergraduate honors program; however, when comparing the percentage of students completing the program with the percentage of honors students in the entire college, over twice as many agricultural education graduates completed the program than the average

percentage of participants for the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences. Also, the graduates averaged slightly more credit hours per quarter than might be expected when comparing the collected data to the University average (Student Enrollment Reporting, Office of the University Registrar, 1999, April; 1999, January; 1998, October; 1998, August; 1998, April; 1998, January; & 1997, October) and the data collected by the Committee on the Undergraduate Experience (1995) at The Ohio State University. When compared to the CUE Report, the graduates' number of hours per week spent on campus was similar to that of other undergraduate students.

The number of faculty known for potential references has decreased overall, from the population's time as an undergraduate to the time of the survey. In regards to career services, over four in ten graduates believed these services to be unimportant. Nearly three-fourths (72.9%) of the agricultural education graduates initially intended their career goal to be that of a high school agricultural education instructor, while approximate two in ten (19.5%) graduates intended their career goal to be that of an extension agent, and the remaining graduates (7.5%) intended their career goal to be with agricultural business and industry.

#### Occupational Choice of Agricultural Education Graduates

Approximately one-half of the population was currently employed as a high school agriculture instructor, while less than one in twenty of the graduates were employed as extension agents. Because employment as an extension agent required a Master's Degree, agricultural education graduates enrolled as full-time graduate students had the potential to add to the proportion of extension agents, but less than 3% of the population was currently enrolled as full-time graduate students. Slightly less than 14%

of the graduates were employed in agricultural business and industry, while nearly 30% were involved in other occupations. The proportion of agricultural education graduates entering the teaching profession was similar to the data found in the review of literature.

#### Relationship of 4-H and FFA Membership to Career Choice

Similar to the data found in the review of literature, 4-H membership had a low relationship with career choice. A moderate relationship was observed between number of years in 4-H and the graduates' current occupations. Those in the population who were currently working as extension agents were likely to have been members of 4-H and were likely to have been members of 4-H longer than those in occupations other than that of an extension agent.

Although a low relationship was observed between number of years in FFA and the graduates' current occupations, a moderate relationship was observed between FFA membership and career choice. Graduates who were FFA members were more likely to be high school agriculture instructors, and graduates who were not FFA members were more likely to be in careers other than a high school agriculture instructor, extension agent, agricultural business/industry, and full-time graduate student.

#### Satisfaction with Undergraduate Experience

Similar to other research (Author Unknown, 1998), seven out of ten graduates (70.4%) believed their overall academic instruction to be rated with a "B" or better letter grade. The population's most common personal needs that were least likely met by campus programs and activities included career needs (45.3%), spiritual needs (38.9%), and emotional needs (24.2%), which coincide with the personal needs least met for all undergraduates (Committee on the Undergraduate Experience, 1995). Although career

needs was identified as a personal need least likely to be met, nearly seven of ten graduates who used career services (69.4%) were satisfied with these services. As for overall perception of faculty advising, over one-fourth of the population believed faculty advising to be “poor” or “very poor.” In regards to interaction with faculty, staff, and administration, 87% of the graduates agreed that the interaction was adequate.

#### Relationship Between Undergraduate Experience Satisfaction and Career Choice

There is a low relationship between current occupation of the graduates’ and satisfaction with overall academic instruction. However, a moderate relationship existed between the graduates’ career choice and the identification of recreational needs as a personal need least likely to be met by campus programs and activities. Overall, a low relationship was observed between the graduates’ career choice and satisfaction with the undergraduate experience.

#### Recommendations

Agricultural education faculty should review the findings of this study and use the information to continue student-centered teaching and advising. Efforts must continue to be made to maintain the quality of teaching and advisement that students receive in the department and the college. Faculty and administration should use this study as they examine the effectiveness and quality of the agricultural education program and the undergraduate experience. Data relative to career patterns and program perceptions should be collected annually, and a formal analysis of the data should be conducted every three to five years.

Faculty and administration of agricultural education program at The Ohio State University need to recognize that only about one-half of the graduates from the program

will be entering careers as high school agricultural instructors. Although this route has been the traditional focus of the program, efforts must to be made meet the needs of the undergraduates who will enter other fields of employment.

Teacher educators in the area of agricultural education should continue to be aware of the potential influence that 4-H and FFA have on the decision to pursue a career in agricultural education. Recognizing this potential influence is necessary for understanding student motives. Such information should also be taken into consideration when developing strategies for recruiting efforts.

### Implications

Since no strong correlations were found between career choice and the undergraduate experience, it is likely that the undergraduates' initial intended career goal upon majoring in agricultural education is likely to be the largest indicator of the graduates' occupational choice after graduation. Although the subjects of this study previously graduated and cannot accurately evaluate the current agricultural education program at The Ohio State University, it is likely that many of their interests and experiences were similar to those of current undergraduates in the program. Furthermore, much of the data resulting from this study had implications much broader than "factors influencing career choice of undergraduate agricultural education graduates" and the research objective of this project. Many of the comments listed in Appendix D provide insight into areas in which the Department of Human and Community Resource Development, at The Ohio State University, must improve. Because many of these comments related to areas beyond the realm of this project, the comments were not



discussed in the findings from the research, Chapter IV. However, many of the comments do suggest deeper implications into the satisfaction of the graduates' undergraduate experience at The Ohio State University. Implications of this study are also applicable beyond The Ohio State University, since educational reform is being implemented across the country.

### Recommendations for Further Research

Several questions emerged as a result of this study that provide a basis for further investigation. Some of the questions include:

1. What is the specific (not grouped) Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) of agricultural education graduates?
2. What is the specific (not grouped) average number of credit hours taken per quarter by agricultural education majors during their undergraduate career?
3. How many hours per week do agricultural education students spend in class? Studying on Campus? With Campus Organizations? Involved in other campus activities?
4. What is the mean number of faculty known well enough by agricultural education undergraduates for them to serve as a potential reference?
5. What do agricultural education graduates believe to be the most influential factor in determining career choice?
6. What aspects of the 4-H and FFA youth programs influence the pursuit of careers in agricultural education?

7. What are the employment needs of those graduates who have not entered a traditional agricultural education related occupation?
8. What other areas of extension are graduates employed, other than the position of extension agent?
9. What other areas of education are graduates employed, other than the position of high school agriculture instructor?
10. For what specific subject areas are graduates employed as agriculture instructors?
11. For what specific subject areas are graduates employed within extension occupations?

These questions should be used as a basis for further research about agricultural education undergraduates.

APPENDIX A  
STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

**The Undergraduate Experience of  
Agricultural Education Graduates**

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Columbus OH 43210

**Section I**

*Please read each question carefully and check the appropriate line. Please check only one unless otherwise indicated.*

**1) What is your gender?**

FEMALE

MALE

**2) Were you a member of 4-H?**

NO

YES - SPECIFY NUMBER OF YEARS: \_\_\_\_\_

**3) Were you a member of FFA?**

NO

YES - SPECIFY NUMBER OF YEARS: \_\_\_\_\_

**4) What year did you graduate from OSU?**

1993

1997

1994

1998

1995

1999

1996

**5) Which quarter did you graduate from OSU?**

AUTUMN

WINTER

SPRING

SUMMER

**6) What was your cumulative GPA upon graduation from OSU?**

2.00-2.29

2.30-2.69

2.70-2.99

3.00-3.29

3.30-3.69

3.70-4.00

**7) Upon graduation from OSU, were you a member of the honors program?**

NO

YES

**8) How many credit hours did you average per quarter?**

LESS THAN 12

12-15

15-18

MORE THAN 18

**9) How many quarters of classes did you take before receiving your bachelor's degree?**

LESS THAN 9

9-11

12-15

16-18

19 OR MORE

**10) Upon declaring your major in agricultural education, what was your intended career goal?**

HIGH SCHOOL AGRICULTURE INSTRUCTOR

EXTENSION AGENT

AGRICULTURAL BUSINESS/INDUSTRY

OTHER-PLEASE SPECIFY: \_\_\_\_\_

**11) Upon receiving a bachelor's degree, which position did you accept?**

HIGH SCHOOL AGRICULTURE INSTRUCTOR

EXTENSION AGENT

AGRICULTURAL BUSINESS/INDUSTRY

FULL-TIME GRADUATE STUDENT

OTHER-PLEASE SPECIFY: \_\_\_\_\_

**12) What is your current occupation?**

HIGH SCHOOL AGRICULTURE INSTRUCTOR

EXTENSION AGENT

AGRICULTURAL BUSINESS/INDUSTRY

FULL-TIME GRADUATE STUDENT

OTHER-PLEASE SPECIFY: \_\_\_\_\_

**13) Including class time and OSU activities, how many hours per week did you spend on campus?**

1-10

11-20

21-30

31-40

41-50

50+

**14) As an undergraduate, how many faculty members did you know well enough to ask for a letter of recommendation?**

- |                            |                                    |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 6         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 7         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 8         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 9 OR MORE |

**15) Today, how many faculty members do you know well enough to ask for a letter of recommendation?**

- |                            |                                    |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 6         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 7         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 8         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 9 OR MORE |

**16) What letter grade would you give your overall academic instruction at OSU?**

- |                             |                             |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A  | <input type="checkbox"/> C  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A- | <input type="checkbox"/> C- |
| <input type="checkbox"/> B+ | <input type="checkbox"/> D+ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> B  | <input type="checkbox"/> D  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> B- | <input type="checkbox"/> E  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> C+ |                             |

**17) Which of your personal needs were least likely met by campus activities and programs?**

**(Check all that apply)**

- SOCIAL NEEDS
- INTELLECTUAL NEEDS
- RECREATIONAL NEEDS
- EMOTIONAL NEEDS
- SPIRITUAL NEEDS
- PHYSICAL NEEDS
- CAREER NEEDS

## Section II

*Please read each question carefully and check the appropriate line. Please check only one response.*

**18) While a student at OSU, how important were career planning services to you?**

- VERY IMPORTANT
- IMPORTANT
- UNIMPORTANT
- VERY UNIMPORTANT

**19) While a student at OSU, how important were career placement services to you?**

- VERY IMPORTANT
- IMPORTANT
- UNIMPORTANT
- VERY UNIMPORTANT

**20) While a student at OSU, how satisfied were you with career planning services?**

- VERY SATISFIED
- SATISFIED
- UNSATISFIED
- VERY UNSATISFIED
- DID NOT USE

**21) While a student at OSU, how satisfied were you with career placement services?**

- VERY SATISFIED
- SATISFIED
- UNSATISFIED
- VERY UNSATISFIED
- DID NOT USE



**22) How would you rate the quality of advising received from your OSU undergraduate advisor?**

EXCELLENT

GOOD

POOR

VERY POOR

**23) How would you rate your OSU undergraduate faculty advisor regarding accessibility?**

EXCELLENT

GOOD

POOR

VERY POOR

*Please respond to following statements. Check only one response after each statement.*

**24) Faculty members in Agricultural Education at OSU were accessible.**

STRONGLY AGREE

AGREE

DISAGREE

STRONGLY DISAGREE

**25) I had adequate interaction with Agricultural Education faculty at OSU.**

STRONGLY AGREE

AGREE

DISAGREE

STRONGLY DISAGREE

**26) I had adequate interaction with Agricultural Education staff at OSU.**

STRONGLY AGREE

AGREE

DISAGREE

STRONGLY DISAGREE

**27) I had adequate interaction with Agricultural Education administration at OSU.**

STRONGLY AGREE

AGREE

DISAGREE

STRONGLY DISAGREE

**28) I had adequate interaction with college administration at OSU.**

STRONGLY AGREE

AGREE

DISAGREE

STRONGLY DISAGREE

**29) When I received services from Agricultural Education staff members, it was productive.**

STRONGLY AGREE

AGREE

DISAGREE

STRONGLY DISAGREE

**30) When I received services from Agricultural Education staff members, they were courteous.**

STRONGLY AGREE

AGREE

DISAGREE

STRONGLY DISAGREE

**31) Campus programs and activities met my personal needs outside the classroom.**

STRONGLY AGREE

AGREE

DISAGREE

STRONGLY DISAGREE

**Any further comments:**

APPENDIX B  
VALIDITY PANEL

The following individuals at The Ohio State University were selected to serve as a validity panel for the questionnaire used in this study. They were selected because of their experience in agricultural education and/or their experience with honors research.

Dr. Jamie Cano, Associate Professor

Agricultural Education

Dr. N.L. McCaslin, Chair

Department of Human & Community Resource Development

Mr. Tracy Kitchel, Graduate Student

Agricultural Education

Mr. Jaime Castillo, Graduate Student

Agricultural Education

Dr. Jan Henderson, Associate Professor

Agricultural Education

Dr. Ray Miller, Assistant Dean, Student Affairs

College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences

APPENDIX C  
“OTHER” OCCUPATIONS

The following occupations were listed by respondents in the “OTHER-PLEASE SPECIFY” line of question 12 in the questionnaire. Respondents determined that these occupations did not fall in the categories of high school agriculture instructor, extension agent, agricultural business/industry, or full-time graduate student. The occupations have been listed alphabetically. (Note: Some respondents who checked “OTHER” as their occupation did not specify what their occupation was.)

Agriscience Instructor – Mid. School

Banking

Campus Crusade for Christ Intern

Construction

Currently looking for position

Extension Associate

Full-time horse trainer

General Manager of A small company

High School Teacher – not Ag

Homemaker

Human Resources

Knowledge Manager

Middle School Ag

Mortgage Lending/Finance

None

OSU Extension Ag/Hort Program Asst.

Package sorter & welder

Sales (Ag)

Sales Manager

Self-Employed, Mary Kay Cosmetics, Beauty Consultant

Senior Computing Consultant

Teacher, 7<sup>th</sup> grade science

University Administrator

Urban Resource Specialist, Muskingum SWCD

US Army Officer

VISTA Member (Nat'l Service); 4-H Afterschool Science Educator for the Ohio

Hunger Task Force

Working part-time while interviewing for teaching positions

**APPENDIX D**

**OTHER COMMENTS TAKEN FROM RETURNED SURVEYS**



The following comments were taken directly from comments written on individual questionnaires by the respondents. The comments were transcribed here with no correction grammatical or spelling mistakes. The transfer of comments was done in this way to ensure that not editorial interpretation took place. Comments including specific names, however, were adjusted so that individuals were not publicly reprimanded or praised. The comments listed below provide further insight into the thoughts and feelings of the population of agricultural education graduates.

“I had a positive experience in Ag. Ed. At O.S.U., however I always felt a negative stigma was placed upon students interested in Extension vs. Teaching in a Traditional Setting. If it had not been for a strong 4-H Background, & close interaction with the state 4-H staff I would not have felt adequately prepared for my work as an Extension Agent.”

“Need to teach more practical situations. It might look good on paper but it does not work in the classroom. If the Dept would care about the undergrads like they do the grad students their might not be as many problems. Grad students 1<sup>st</sup>, undergrads last; need to reverse the order”

“I would have to say that my undergrad experience in Ag Ed was very positive. The staff in the department took time to help you, and did not treat you like a number. I had friends who had trouble getting in to see their advisors. I never had trouble getting in to see my advisor in the Ag Ed department. I use the skills I learned in Ag Ed everyday in my job working for my County Soil & Water Conservation District.”

“Are you referring to department of anything? (i.e. Question #14)

Thank goodness staff can make up for some of the unaccessibility of faculty!

Too bad we’re not all the “average” Student for programs and services!”

In regard to question # 19, “the one in the Dean’s office did not apply to my career.”

“As a whole I was very pleased w/ my education and preparation for ag ed. I wish the undergrad classes would involve record books, FFA, and curriculum development for an entire program. This is one of the greatest weaknesses I have experience & viewed from other younger teachers.”

“I had a good undergrad experience! Great Faculty!”

“I am a hort. Teacher not Ag. Ed. Prod. I was put on a production Ag curriculum. It took a Hort. Instructor Dr. Steven Still to point out 2 classes I needed to be able to teach. This resulted in my last quarter taking 25 credit hours. I feel that even though there are fewer Hort. Teachers than Production teachers they should be treated as individuals and not stereotyped into Ag. Production.”

“The Faculty was not very good. Did not help much to learn how to be a teacher. The program was terrible.”

“During my undergrad. Studies My academic advisor was changed. The questions regarding academic advising I referred to my most recent advisor.”

“I was given a lot of run around through my advisor. The production minor is a waste of time. I feel it limits you much more than it helps. A person gets so little experience in everything that it qualifies you for nothing. People should be able to minor in a specific area that will benefit them the most.

“While a student I tried not to be too dependent on the Agricultural faculty – Staff.”

In response to question # 22, “I had two advisors. My first was terrible. My second was excellent. Neither are w/ OSU any longer.” In response to question #24, “Seemed like they traveled a lot.”

“Sorry I’m late. I’m currently deployed to Kosovo.”

“\*You should provide a ‘neutral’ for #24-31. While at OSU I felt that way too much emphasis was placed on catering to the needs of certain Fraternity members. If a fraternity member was in the same pinch as a non-frat member, I repeatedly observed Faculty bending rules for one and not the other. This is one issue that needs attention.”

“I did not receive your first survey, or I would have immediately responded.”

“I am not sure what information you are trying to obtain. I wish I could answer each question for each individual. It does not seem fair or accurate to rate accessibility or advising for everyone as a whole. To average the score would not do justice to the outstanding, and would inflate those that are rotten.”

“My undergraduate experience would have been much more satisfying if I had been able to avoid Dr. \_\_\_\_\_’s classes. He was the only professor I dealt with that I felt was unprofessional in his behavior in class and outside of class. Fortunately he was the exception. The rest of the faculty in the Dept. of Ag. Edu. were excellent teachers and very helpful. (FYI – I received this questionnaire only two days before I received the follow-up letter dated July 9, 1999 on July 16.)”

“Most disappointed with the quality of the evaluations given during my student teaching experience. I did not receive information on what I could do to improve myself from the OSU faculty member evaluating me.”

“I would do it all over again. I loved it! The best 4 years so far!”

“In 1993, Ag Campus was very homophobic. I came out in 1990. I quickly realized that my lifestyle was not congruent with people coming from a rural/farm background. Even though I grew up on a farm in NW Ohio, my coming out made me feel out of place and unwelcome. I hope things are different in 1999/2000. I doubt it though.”

“The biggest problem w/ Ag Ed is the lack of content courses you can fit in 4 yrs. I would have loved to take 2-3 more Ag Mech. Classes, 2-3 more Agronomy & 2-3 more animal science. I wasted my time in Russian, Women Studies, Ag Ed 200 & several other classes.”

“In the college of Ag there is a need for more technical instruction & less humanities; More math & Agr Science, & Language arts. There is also a need for instruction in the development of records and paper work which an instructor should keep to cover his or her ass. The Ag Ed department did not prepare me to be an Ag Teacher. My Agricultural Education was less than a positive experience.”

“Many of the faculty that were there when I was there have left or are leaving. There are very few Ag Ed instructors left and the Department is a far cry from what it once was.”

“In question 10, I said that when I declared my major my intentions were to become an ag. Teacher. That is true, however, I chose to change my focus to business/Industry my senior year. This aspect of ag. Ed. Is not given the attention given to Extension and teacher ed. This aspect needs to be given more respect, attention, and career assistance.”

“I felt I had a poor advisor. He had his favorites and I wasn't one of them. He never had time for me or gave me advice for my needs.”

“I was very happy with my undergrad. Experience in the Ag. Ed. Department. That is why I returned for my Masters!”

“I minored in Ag. Econ. – This tended to limit the attention received from Ag Ed Faculty due to the fact I was looking into career areas other than Voc. Ed./FFA Teacher Advisor – It isn’t that ‘everyone’ is going to teach Ag Ed. There is a great deal of ignorance toward the impact this program has on Ag Business/Industry by the Ag. Ed. Dept. in general.”

“I worked a great deal while in college and a few of the Faculty & Staff members did not take that into consideration when dealing with & advising students.”

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