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*Third Biennial Workshop of National Association of Agricultural  
Economics Administrators (NAAEA)*

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*Nashville, Tennessee*

***“WHAT IS AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS?”***

*Sponsored by*

*American Agricultural Economics Association  
and  
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*Compiled by*

*Larry G. Hamm, President NAAEA*

**HOW UNIVERSITIES VIEW  
AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS DEPARTMENTS?**

Larry J. Connor  
Dean, College of Agriculture  
University of Florida

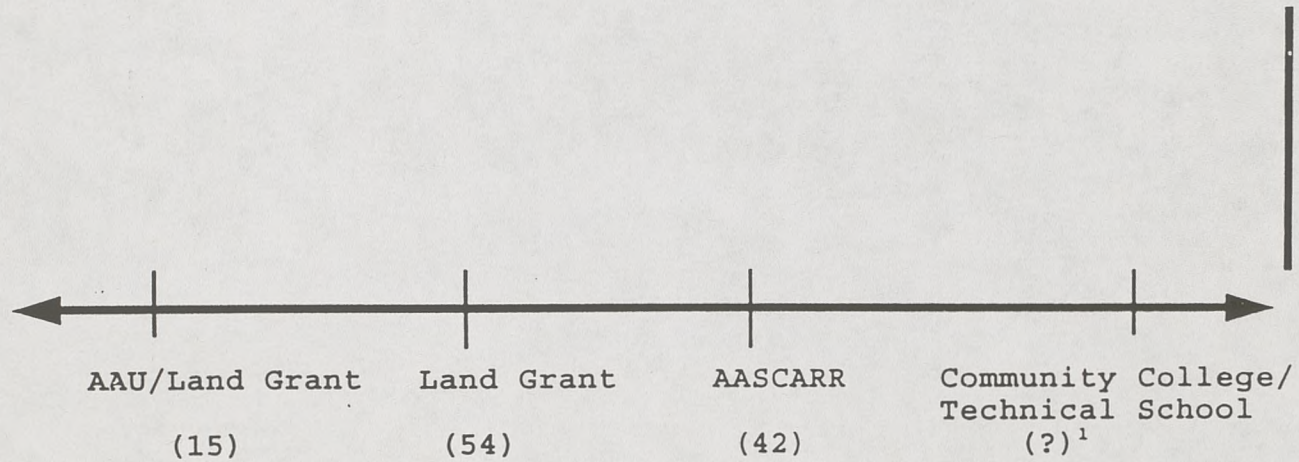


FIGURE 1. THE CONTINUUM OF INSTITUTIONAL, EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS FOR AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS

<sup>1</sup> 2 year degrees in Agricultural Economics were granted from 28 institutions in 1992-93

**Table 1****Impacts of Institutional Setting on Agricultural Economics Program Emphasis**

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| Program                  | Institutional Setting |            |         |                                |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|------------|---------|--------------------------------|
|                          | AAU/<br>Land Grant    | Land Grant | AASCARR | Comm. College/<br>Tech. School |
| Und. Ed.                 | 1 to 2                | 2 to 1     | 1       | 1                              |
| Grad. Ed.                | 1                     | 2          | 3       | 4                              |
| Disciplinary<br>Research | 1                     | 2          | 3 to 2  | 4                              |
| Applied<br>Research      | 2                     | 1 to 2     | 3 to 2  | 4                              |
| Extension                | 1 to 2                | 1          | 3       | 4                              |

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1 = Major Emphasis

2 = Moderate Emphasis

3 = Minor Emphasis

4 = No Emphasis

Table 2

Degrees Awarded by NASULGC/ACOP and AASCARR Institutions in Agricultural Economics Specializations/Academic 1992-93 <sup>1</sup>

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|                                    | <u>2 Year</u> | <u>B.S.</u> | <u>M.S.</u> | <u>Ph.D.</u> | <u>Totals</u> |
|------------------------------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|---------------|
| NASULGC/ACOP Institutions          | 111           | 2,483       | 437         | 135          | 3,166         |
| AASCARR Institutions               | 1             | 1,014       | 46          | 0            | 1,061         |
| Total Degrees Awarded <sup>2</sup> | 112           | 3,283       | 465         | 135          | 3,995         |

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<sup>1</sup> Does not include Natural Resources specializations

<sup>2</sup> Totals do not add

### **Major Forces Impacting Departments**

1. Budget Reductions/Outlook
2. Budget and Faculty Accountability
3. Loss of Confidence by Shapers of Public Policy and Philanthropic Institutions
4. Disciplinary Pressures
5. Shifting Clientele Base/Needs
6. Parental and Student Concerns over Jobs
7. Enrollment Decline in Late 80's/Current Enrollment
8. Changing Academic Cultures
9. Changing Views of Academic Scholarship and Outreach
10. Increased Administrative Turnover
11. New Educational Technology

### **Views from the Vice President/Agricultural Deans/Directors**

1. Some of Our Best Faculty Are Agricultural Economists.
2. Agricultural Economics Needs to Pay More Attention to Service Courses/Minors for the Rest of the College.
3. Agricultural Economics Needs to Pay More Attention to Interdisciplinary Relationships with Other Agricultural Departments.
4. A Great Deal of the Agricultural Economic Research Is Very Disciplinary and Irrelevant to the Needs of the State.
5. Agricultural Economics Is Neglecting its Service to and Relationships with Commercial Agriculture.
6. What Is Happening to Student Numbers/Credit Hours?
7. We Don't Get Much out of Agricultural Economics from the Research and/or Extension Investments.
8. It's Tough to Sell Disciplinary Agricultural Economics Research to --- the Legislature and Our Clientele.
9. We Have a Nationally Ranked Department, Although it Doesn't Contribute Much to Our State Programs and Clientele.

10. It Appears That the Department Is a Collection of Individuals with Big Egos.
11. The Department Has Some of the Biggest Prima Donnas in the College.
12. Agricultural Economics Provides Some Major Leadership for International Programs in the College.
13. The Ag Econ Faculty Have Always Been Major Contributors to Academic Governance.
14. Why Does Agricultural Economics Have a Department Publication Series?

### **Major Concerns of College**

1. Outreach Programs (Research, Extension and Teaching) Need More Emphasis/Focus
2. Interdisciplinary/Interdepartmental Relationships in College Need Strengthening
  - A. Courses/Minors/Joint Majors
  - B. Applied Research/Extension Programming
3. Maintain Strong Posture in Commercial Agriculture
  - A. Does Not Preclude Program Development in Other Areas
4. Student Numbers/Credit Hours/Service Courses

### **Views from the Provost/vice President for Research Offices**

1. Why Isn't Agricultural Economics Part of Economics?
2. Why Aren't There More Minority Faculty?
3. Why Are Minority Students Attracted to Agricultural Economics?
4. Why Did Agricultural Economics Undergraduate Enrollment Drop in the Late 801 S? Why Is it Dropping (Increasing) at the Present Time?
5. Why Should Extension and Agricultural Experiment Station FTES Be Excluded in Determining the Departments Teaching Productivity? They Are Part of the Department Faculty!
6. Why Doesn't this Person with an 80 Percent Research Appointment Have More Publications (Particularly Journal Articles)? Faculty in Other Colleges Seeking Promotion and/or Tenure Have More Publications with Lower Research Appointments.



7. Why Is External Funding Dropping, or Not Increasing at the Same Rate as Other Units in Your College?
8. What Criteria Do You Use in Evaluating Extension Productivity?
9. Why Does the Unit Attract a Relative Large Number of Graduate Students Compared to Other Units in the College?
10. What Is Agricultural Economics?

#### **Major Concerns at University Level**

1. Existence as a Separate Department/Discipline
2. Student Numbers/Credit Hours
3. External Funding
4. Faculty/Student Diversity

#### **General Recommendations**

1. Maintain Student Enrollment/Credit Hours
2. Develop/Maintain Good Working Relationships with Other Units In/Outside of College
3. Maintain a Strong Posture in Commercial Agriculture, as Programs Are Developed in Other Areas
4. Maintain an Equilibrium with Respect To:
  - A. Outreach vs Campus Programs
  - B. Disciplinary vs Applied Research
  - C. Theoretical vs Institutional vs Empirical Emphasis

