

IDENTIFYING EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR  
PARTICIPATING IN THE NATIONAL CHAPTER  
AWARD PROGRAM: A DELPHI STUDY

By

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Abstract: This study utilized a modified Delphi technique to gather consensus through the use of an expert panel. Email was used to distribute Qualtrics links for participant recruitment and three rounds of questions. Round One collected personal and professional characteristic questions and asked one open-ended question. Strategies and themes were discerned through qualitative content analysis in Round One. A summated rating scale was utilized to reach consensus of agreement in the second and third rounds. This study yielded 37 strategies that could be utilized by FFA chapters to reach a three-star ranking in the NCA Program. Strategies were categorized into four themes: (1) Planning & Resources, (2) Implementing Activities, (3) Application Writing, and (4) Reflecting. The *Planning and Resources* theme revealed teachers are focused on providing service activities that impact the local community which aligns with the FFA mission and purpose i.e., provide opportunities for students to become productive citizens. Some teachers did not fully utilize a Program of Activities (POA) and others did not use the NCA as a template for the POA. Most strategies in the *Implementing Activities* theme revealed student involvement and engagement were crucial to having successful activities. *Application Writing* strategies such as writing action plans and having officers complete the application were not seen as integral strategies by all teachers. *Reflecting* was the least cited theme with only four accepted strategies. These strategies have the potential to serve as a resource for FFA chapters competing in the NCA program. The themes suggested a potential approach to completing the NCA application that reflects the experiential nature of the comprehensive model of school-based agricultural education and supports the National FFA Organization mission, vision, and motto. The themes identified strategies that could align with the experiential learning process. Items that national leaders would point to as critical to the NCA application process were not seen as strategies for completing the application by panelists. The responses that failed to meet consensus reflected missed learning opportunities that could lead to reflection and active experimentation in a real-world environment which trends away from the mission and vision of the National FFA Organization.

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## CHAPTER I

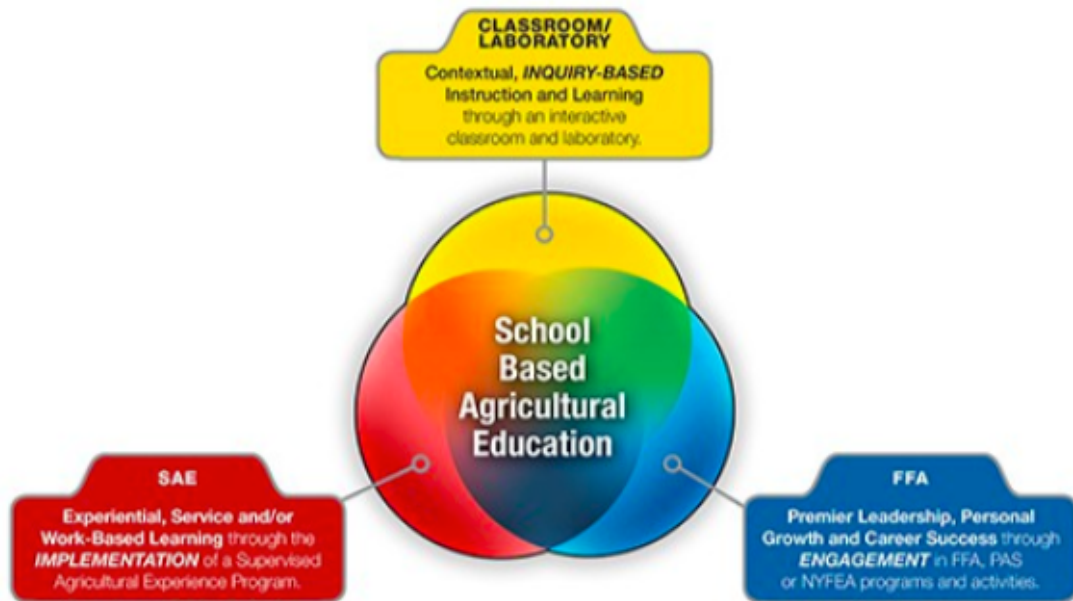
### INTRODUCTION

FFA advisement and program management have been shown as a high-priority, in-service need for School-Based Agricultural Education (SBAE) teachers in their role as FFA advisors (DiBenedetto et al., 2018; Eck et al., 2021; Layfield & Dobbins, 2002; Roberts & Dyer, 2004). FFA activities are seen as important to both SBAE teachers and administrators (Doss & Rayfield, 2021). A quality FFA chapter can be defined by the opportunities it offers to student members as well as the characteristics of the FFA advisor (Jenkins & Kitchel, 2009). Some of these quality indicators include having a well-rounded and challenging Program of Activities that is planned and implemented by FFA members, utilizing a committee structure to plan and conduct activities and encouraging member recognition through student and chapter award applications with the assistance of the FFA advisor (Jenkins & Kitchel, 2009). Each of these quality indicators can be addressed through participation in the National Chapter Award (NCA) Program (Official FFA Manual, 2021). Before we can address the needs of teachers and students involved in SBAE programs, we must first define these programs.

This study focused on SBAE at the secondary level. “The instructional components of agricultural education programs include classroom and laboratory instruction, supervised agricultural experience (SAE) programs, and student leadership development through participation in programs and activities of the National FFA Organization” (Phipps et al., 2008 p. 4). As shown in Figure 1, the three-component model of agricultural education depicts how classroom/laboratory instruction, SAEs, and FFA overlap to create a complete agricultural education program consisting of instruction in and about agriculture, experiential learning, and leadership education (NAAE, 2022; Roberts & Ball, 2009). This model and its integral components have become a framework for the delivery of SBAE programs (Croom, 2008).

**Figure 1**

*School-Based Agricultural Education Three-Component Model*



*Note.* Reprinted from *School-Based Agricultural Education Three-Component Model*. (National FFA Organization, 2021).

The website of the National FFA Organization states at the time of its founding in 1928, “Their mission was to prepare future generations for the challenges of feeding a

growing population” (National FFA Organization, 2022). The National FFA Organization has evolved to encompass more opportunities than production agriculture and seeks to prepare students for careers that reflect the diversity of the growing agriculture industry (Official FFA Manual, 2021). Today, the FFA mission statement reads, “FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education” (Official FFA Manual, 2021, p. 6). This mission is accomplished through the implementation of FFA programs such as Career Development Events (CDEs) and Leadership Development Events (LDEs). It has been suggested CDE participation prepares students for both agricultural and non-agricultural careers through the acquisition of skills (Lundry et al., 2015). SAEs are also an opportunity for students to acquire technical and employability skills for career success (Nieman et al., 2017).

According to the organization’s vision statement, “FFA provides the next generation of leaders who will change the world” (Official FFA Manual, 2021, p. 7). Leadership development occurs in agricultural education through conventions, conferences, competitions, and service learning. Roberts and Edwards (2018) suggested service learning as a teaching method in SBAE has historically aimed to create moral and engaged citizens in local communities. This civic engagement paired with reflection is a valuable tool in agricultural education (Bird et al., 2019). Reflecting on experiences that occur through FFA programs leads to student learning.

“Agricultural education is uniquely poised to help students through an effective model of instruction that is experiential by nature” (Baker, et al., 2012, p. 12). Through FFA experiences, agricultural education students can engage in the learning process

outlined by experiential learning theory (Baker, et al., 2012; Kolb & Kolb, 2005). This experiential learning happens in agricultural education through the four learning modes of experiential learning: Concrete Experience (CE), Reflective Observation (RO), Abstract Conceptualization (AC), and Active Experimentation (AE) (Baker et al., 2012; Kolb, 1984). The FFA Motto highlights how all three parts of an agricultural education program fit together. “Learning to Do, Doing to Learn, Earning to Live, Living to Serve” (Official FFA Manual, 2021, p. 27). Supervised Agricultural Experiences (SAEs) are one-way agricultural education programs carry out the FFA motto by learning through hands-on experiences i.e., inputting financial data or providing services.

This study focused on the programs and activities implemented by FFA chapters to meet the goals of their agricultural education program as outlined in a local chapter’s program of activities. The Program of Activities (POA) is a tool used by FFA chapters to plan, organize, and implement activities and events for the year. The POA along with the National Quality Chapter Standards (NQCS) can then be used to complete the National Chapter Award (NCA) Application. “The National Chapter Award Program is designed to recognize FFA chapters that actively implement the mission and strategies of the organization” (Official FFA Manual, 2021, p. 66). The NCA Program rewards chapters for providing experiences that emphasize growing leaders, building communities, and strengthening agriculture for their members (Official FFA Manual, 2021). Each state can submit a minimum of three chapters or the top 10% of the total number of chapters, whichever number is highest, for the National Chapter Award (National FFA Organization, 2022). National Chapter Award Applications are ranked as one, two, or three-star chapters with the three-star ranking being the highest ranking awarded to FFA

chapters at the national level (National FFA Organization, 2022). National Chapter Award ranking has been shown to be a factor in determining the quality of an FFA program (Asiabaka, 1984; Vaughn & Moore, 2000).

The NCA Program seeks to benefit FFA members, chapters, local communities, and agriculture by conducting activities that align with the divisions and quality standards outlined by FFA (Official FFA Manual, 2021). It has been suggested employability skills such as leadership, communication, and critical thinking are developed through participation in FFA programs (Copeland et al., 2020). Student ownership, participation, and accountability for FFA activities has been shown to meet the basic human needs of love and belonging, self-esteem, and self-actualization of high school students (Rose et al., 2016). A chapter's POA provides an opportunity for FFA members to develop technical, human relations, decision-making, and employability skills (Program of Activities: Divisions and Quality Standards, 2018). These skill development opportunities align with the precepts of the FFA Mission and Vision by fostering leadership, personal growth, and career success (Official FFA Manual, 2021). FFA chapter activities also allow students to live out the FFA Motto by applying their classroom learning and gaining technical agriculture skills while serving their chapter and community (Official FFA Manual, 2021).

The FFA component of SBAE has the potential to engage students in experiential learning (Baker et al., 2012). The FFA Chapter reflects a "vehicle for structured learning" (Newcomb et al., 2004, p.268). The framework or structure for learning is the FFA program of activities (Newcomb et al., 2004). The FFA advisor is responsible for teaching and reinforcing the development of leadership and personal development

abilities in students using the Program of Activities to provide concrete experiences, reflective observations, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation in the context of leadership, career, and personal development activities reflected in the chapters Program of Activities. Successful implementation of the Program of Activities is the foundation of the National Chapter Award program.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The National Chapter Award Program has differing levels of participation across states (FFA Results). Nationally, 10% of all FFA chapters can submit applications, only 563 chapters submitted the NCA application in 2021 (FFA Results). This may seem like an appropriate number of submissions, however, 563 applications reflects only six percent of the 8,817 FFA chapters nationwide (National FFA Organization, 2022). According to Bolton et al. (2018) students should be enthusiastic and willing participants in FFA programs to ensure chapter success and personal growth for the individual students. To that end, how do chapters develop FFA members' knowledge and skills through FFA programs such as the National Chapter Award Program? What strategies are used by SBAE teachers/FFA advisors to implement the Program of Activities in FFA chapters?

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this study was to identify strategies implemented by FFA chapter advisors to attain a three-star ranking in the National Chapter Award Program.

### **Objectives**

This study was guided by the following objectives:

1. Identify the strategies used by FFA chapter advisors to achieve a three-star ranking in the National Chapter Award Program.
2. Identify themes that could help facilitate achievement of a three-star ranking in the National Chapter Award Program.

### **Definition of Terms**

National Chapter Award Divisions- The National Chapter Award is comprised of three divisions reflecting the National Quality Chapter Standards i.e., Growing Leaders, Building Communities, and Strengthening Agriculture (National FFA Organization, 2022)

National Chapter Award (NCA)- The National Chapter Award is an award program that recognizes chapters who present an outstanding Program of Activities that reflect goals and activities related to growing leaders, building communities, and strengthening agriculture through the completion of the National Chapter Award Application.

National Quality Chapter Standards (NQCS)- The 13 indicators are used to improve chapter operations and outline the minimum criteria for FFA chapters in Form I of the National Chapter Award (Official FFA Manual, 2021). As listed in the Official FFA Manual (2021), these indicators are:

1. All students enrolled in the agricultural education program can become a member of the FFA.
2. Students build a progressive leadership and personal development plan.
3. All students participate in meaningful leadership and personal development activities in each component of the agricultural education program:
  - Classroom and laboratory instruction.



- Experiential, project, and work-based learning through SAEs.
  - Leadership and personal development through FFA.
4. The FFA chapter constitution and bylaws are up-to-date and approved by chapter members.
  5. FFA members are involved in the planning and implementation of a Program of Activities (POA).
  6. The FFA chapter conducts regularly scheduled chapter meetings.
  7. An awards recognition program planned and conducted by FFA members is in place.
  8. The FFA chapter has a current budget which provides the financial resources to support the POA.
  9. Capable and trained officers lead the FFA chapter.
  10. The FFA chapter has an active, dedicated support group (i.e., FFA Alumni and Supporters and agriculture booster club).
  11. Stakeholders are engaged in developing and supporting a quality chapter.
  12. An SAE is an integral component of the agricultural education program, with all students maintaining an exploratory SAE and career plan of study.
  13. A recruitment and retention plan is yielding steady or increasing student enrollment.

(p. 47-48)

Program of Activities (POA)- A written plan representing goals prepared by local FFA members and serves as a guide for all activities FFA members will participate in for the year (Official FFA Manual, 2021; Phipps et. al, 2008).

Quality Standards- There are 15 quality standards that guide the activities of FFA chapters. There are five standards for each of the three divisions of the National Chapter Award (National FFA Organization, 2022). These 15 quality standards are listed below.

1. Leadership: Activities that help the individual develop technical, human relations and decision-making skills to grow leaders.
2. Healthy Lifestyle: Activities that promote the well-being of students mentally or physically, in achieving the positive evolution of the whole person.
3. Scholarship: Activities that develop a positive attitude toward lifelong learning experiences.
4. Personal Growth: Activities conducted that improve the identity and self-awareness of members. These activities should reflect members' unique talents and potential by reinforcing their human and employability skills. The activities should strive to enhance the quality of life and contribute to members' life goals and development.
5. Career Success: Activities that promote student involvement and growth through agriculture related experiences and/or entrepreneurship and promote career readiness.
6. Environmental: Activities conducted to preserve natural resources and develop more environmentally responsible individuals.
7. Human Resources: Activities conducted to improve the welfare and well-being of members and citizens of the community.
8. Citizenship: Activities conducted to encourage members to become active, involved citizens of their school, community, and country.

9. Stakeholder Engagement: Activities conducted to develop teamwork and cooperation between the local chapter and stakeholders.
10. Economic Development: Activities conducted to improve the economic welfare of the community.
11. Support Group: Activities conducted to develop and maintain positive relations among FFA, parents and community leaders interested in supporting agricultural education.
12. Chapter Recruitment: Activities conducted to increase agricultural education enrollment and/or FFA membership and encourage greater participation.
13. Safety: Activities that enhance safety in the community.
14. Agricultural Advocacy: Activities conducted to articulate and promote agricultural programs, practices, policies and/or education to elicit action.
15. Agricultural Literacy: Activities that help consumers become better informed about the production, distribution and daily impact of food, fiber, and fuel.  
[8\)](https://ffa.app.box.com/s/jdxz4op5su9yz2wljgoyuca0swfzanga/file/295925220028)

### **Assumptions of the Study**

The following assumptions were made in conducting this study:

1. FFA Chapters provided the context for the initial open-ended question. As such, responses shared by the advisors were considered as approaches used by the chapter to complete the National Chapter Award Application.
2. All advisors on the panel were familiar with the skills, techniques, and strategies needed to complete the National Chapter Award application.

3. If a chapter was advised by multiple advisors, the advisor responsible for the award application responded to each round of the Delphi study.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The following were limitations of the study:

1. The FFA advisors (expert panelists) in this study were selected using the list of FFA chapters that received a three-star chapter ranking during the last five years. Consequently, teachers that received a three-star ranking prior to the five-year period reflected by this study may not have been asked to participate.

## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to present a review of applicable literature supporting this study. Experiential learning served as the theoretical base for the study while the conceptual framework offered by the three-component model of agricultural education provided the framework for findings and recommendations. The review explores the evolution of Career and Technical Education, the legislation enabling the application and development of school-based agricultural education at the secondary level, and opportunities provided by youth development organizations i.e., facilitation of skill acquisition through FFA in a local community. This chapter also provides an overview of the National FFA Organization, the Program of Activities, and the role FFA advisors play in program success.

#### **Theoretical Framework**

Dewey (1938) suggested concrete experiences in education can lead to growth. Experiences in conjunction with observation, reflection, and conceptualization represent

the cyclical process of experiential learning (Dewey, 1938; Roberts, 2006). Roberts (2006) summarized experiential learning theories this way.

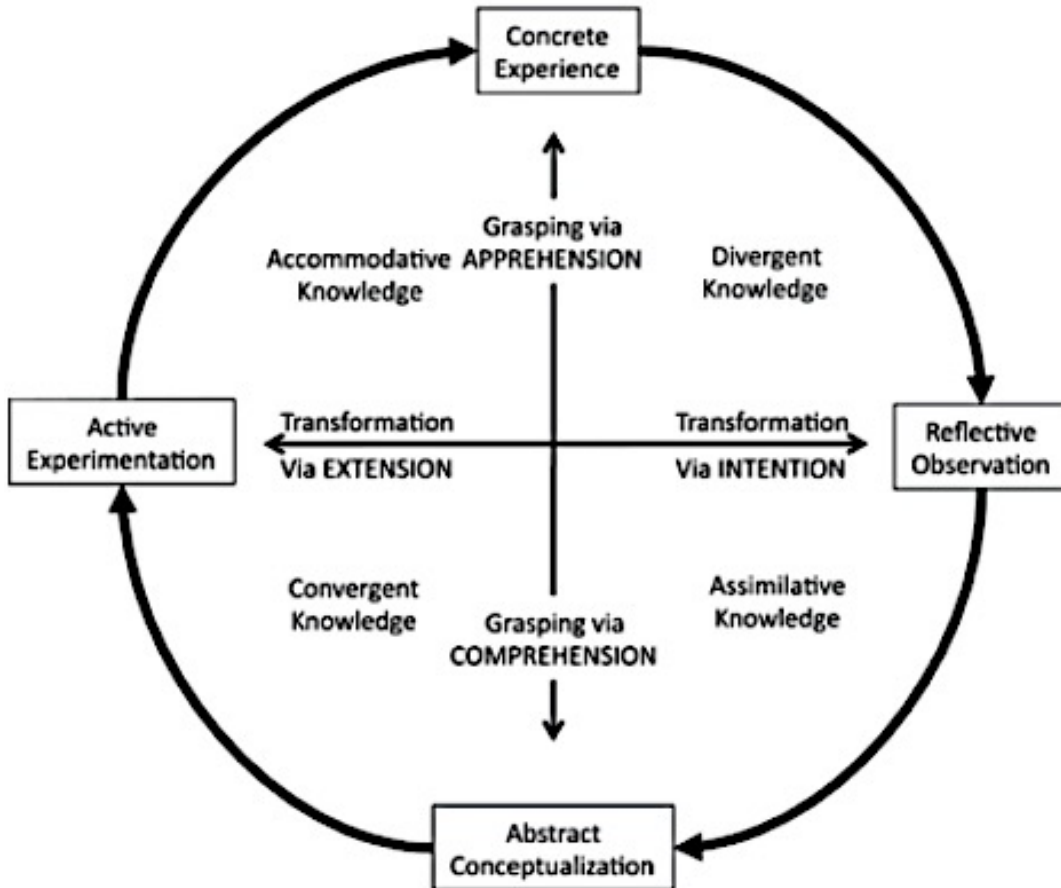
Experiential learning begins with an initial focus on the learner, followed by an initial experience. After the experience, learners reflect on their observations, and then formulate generalizations. Using those generalizations, learners subsequently experience the phenomenon again, by testing the generalizations with experimentation. Following experimentation, learners further reflect and refine the generalizations, thus leading to further experimentation. The experiential learning process is on-going in a spiral-like pattern. (p. 22)

Roberts (2006) recommends that while experiential learning is a process defined by theory, the context; e.g., the National Chapter Award Program, is also defining.

Kolb (1984) suggests for both an experience and a transformation for learning to occur. “Knowledge results from the combination of grasping experience and transforming it” (Kolb, 1984, p. 41). The four modes of learning, Concrete Experience (CE), Reflective Observation (RO), Abstract Conceptualization (AC), and Active Experimentation (AE), can occur in any order (Baker et al., 2012; Kolb & Kolb, 2009; Kolb, 1984; Roberts, 2006). While CE and AC demonstrate the grasping of information, RO and AE demonstrate how experience is transformed as shown in Figure 2 (Kolb, 1984).

**Figure 2**

*Model of Experiential Learning Process*

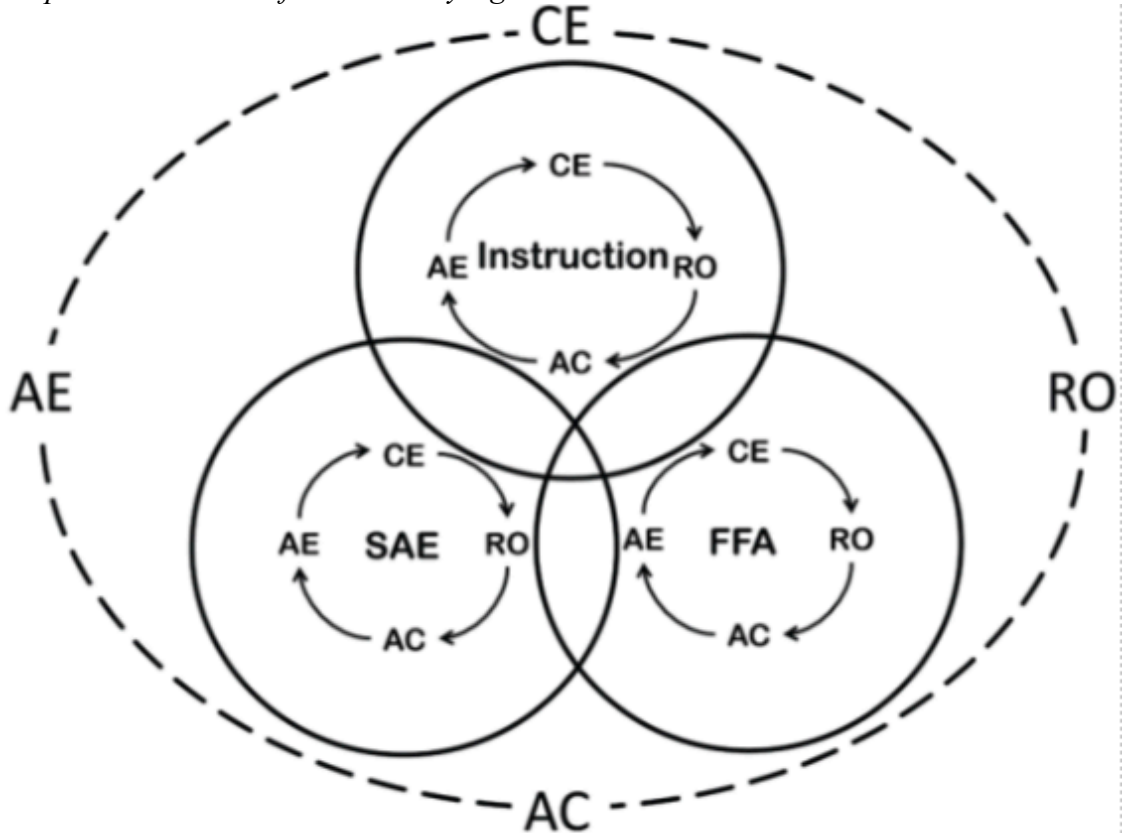


*Note.* Reprinted from *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development* (p. 42), by David A. Kolb, 1984, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice–Hall, Inc. Copyright 1984 by Prentice–Hall, Inc.

Experiential learning is widely used in the agricultural education field (Albritton & Roberts, 2020; Baker et al., 2012; Coleman et al., 2021; Ramsey & Edwards, 2011; Rubenstein et al., 2016). “The experiential learning model, when placed on the agricultural education model, illustrates the total learning experience of agricultural education” (Baker et al., 2012, p. 6). The comprehensive model for secondary education indicates all modes of Kolb’s experiential learning process materialize in all aspects of agricultural education: i.e., instruction, SAE, and FFA (Baker et al., 2012, Kolb, 1984).

**Figure 3**

*Comprehensive Model for Secondary Agricultural Education*



*Note.* Adapted from “Aligning Kolb’s Experiential Learning Theory with a Comprehensive Agricultural Education Model,” by M. A. Baker, J. S. Robinson, and D. A. Kolb, 2012, *Journal of Agricultural Education*, 53(4), p. 9. Copyright 2012 by the American Association for Agricultural Education.

Phipps et al. (2008) defined experiential learning “as a direct encounter with a phenomenon under study and conscious transformation of that experience into new knowledge” (p. 190). This reflects a constructivist view of learning where students are prompted to engage in problem-based learning (Phipps et al., 2008). While this approach is generally applied in laboratory settings, problem solving can readily occur in the classroom, FFA, and SAE (Phipps et al., 2008). Scholars vested in experiential learning suggest the questions, “what happened?”, “so what do I conclude?”, and “now what do I



do?” can be used to guide students through the experiential learning process (Kolb, 1984; Phipps et al., 2008).

According to Lawson (2016), “Experiential learning is a process by which participants learn inductively, that is, discover for themselves the intended learning through direct experience during an activity” (p. 166). This process allows individuals to come to their own conclusions based on their experience (Lawson, 2016). In the experiencing phase, students participate in an activity to begin the process (Lawson, 2016). Reactions to and observations of the experience are then shared in the publishing phase. The next step in this cycle is processing where the experience is discussed to interpret what has occurred. By generalizing, connections are made to discover the meaning of the activity and a deeper understanding of how it relates to other experiences. Next, the new learning can be applied to future situations, therefore restarting the cycle of experiential learning (Lawson, 2016). While this process of experiential learning occurs in all three components of agricultural education, this study focuses on the FFA component and its programs i.e., the National Chapter Award Program.

The NCA reflects a POA developed by an FFA chapter’s members and advisors. This experience-rich process potentially provides robust opportunities for FFA members to engage in the process of experiential learning. Planning, budgeting, implementing, and reporting the goals and objectives of a local FFA chapter lend themselves to generalizing, problem-solving, and reflection on the process of engaging in the integral nature of the three-component model of agricultural education. In agricultural education, experiential learning takes place via activities that take place during classroom instruction, SAEs, and FFA (Baker et al., 2012). Leading the researcher to select the three-component model of

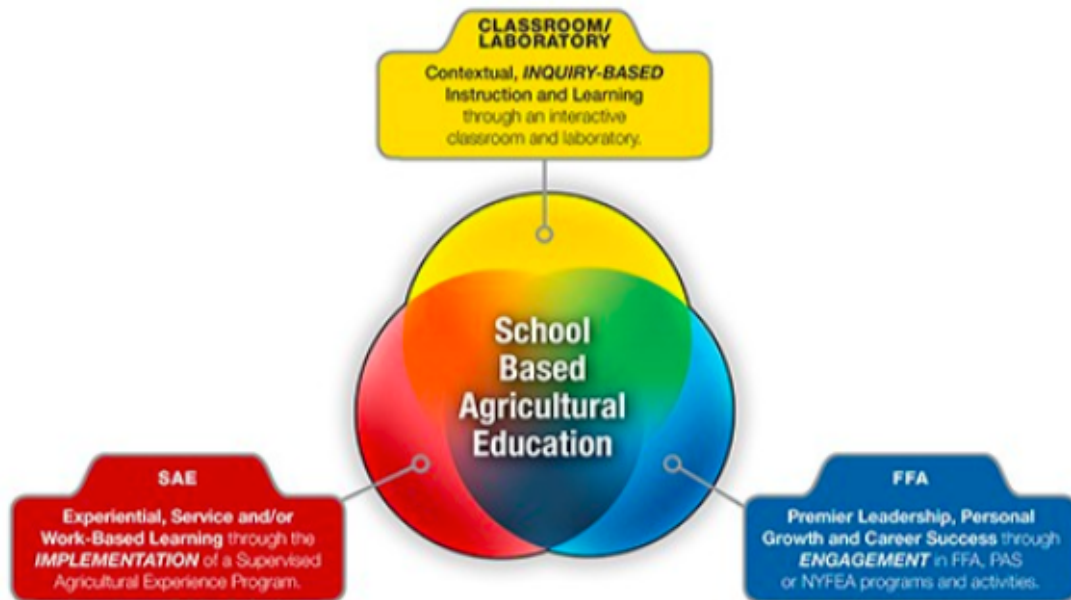
agricultural education as the conceptual lens to consider findings and frame recommendations for future practice and research.

### Conceptual Framework

The three-component model of agricultural education first appeared in the FFA Advisors Handbook in 1975 (Croom, 2008). This model demonstrates the interaction of three components of school-based agricultural education: classroom/laboratory instruction, SAE, and FFA. The delivery of all three components represents the integral nature of school-based agricultural education (Official FFA Manual, 2021).

**Figure 1**

*School-Based Agricultural Education Three-Component Model*



*Note.* Reprinted from *School-Based Agricultural Education Three-Component Model*. (National FFA Organization, 2021).

The classroom/laboratory instruction component encompasses those learning experiences which occur during agricultural education courses in secondary schools taught by SBAE teachers. The classroom component introduces students to contextual agriculture knowledge that is reinforced through the other components of the three-

component model. Agricultural education classroom teaching reflects both the content and context for students to become lifelong learners, agriculturally literate citizens, and skilled workers (Roberts & Ball, 2009). Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) programs are work-based learning experiences in agriculture that are planned and implemented by students with supervision from their SBAE instructors. The third component of this model is engagement in the National FFA Organization. The National FFA Organization is unique in terms of Career and Technical Student Organizations; due to federal legislation, FFA is integral to school-based agricultural education.

### **Career and Technical Education**

The Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 provided federal funding for vocational agriculture in schools (Phipps, 1975). As a result, SBAE was established as part of public education in the U.S. (Phipps et al., 2008). SBAE has evolved from having a sole focus on production agriculture to encompassing the preparation of students for careers in a variety of agriculture related opportunities (Phipps et al., 2008). According to Phipps et al. (2008):

Agricultural education may be defined as systematic instruction in agriculture and natural resources at the elementary, middle school, secondary, postsecondary, or adult levels for the purpose of (1) preparing people for entry or advancement in agricultural occupations and professions, (2) job creation and entrepreneurship, and (3) agricultural literacy. (p. 3)

Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, such as agricultural education, prepare students to be skilled workers as well as lifelong learners in our society (Roberts & Ball, 2009). Additionally, CTE contributes to economic growth when these skilled workers

pursue careers in business and industry (Wilson, 2014). The Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources (AFNR) sector of CTE accounts for more than two and eight tenths' percent of the U.S. workforce and more than 400 billion dollars in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) with 139.6 billion in exported goods (ACTE, 2020; USDA, 2020). The skilled workforce needed to facilitate this effort are prepared through CTE programs in secondary, postsecondary, and adult education (ACTE, 2020). In the AFNR Career Cluster alone there were projected to be approximately 813,600 job openings by 2022 (Torpey, 2015). Coursework, work-based learning, and Career and Technical Student Organization (CTSO) experiences create graduates who are college and career ready to meet the needs of our ever-changing society (Rhodes, 2014). SBAE is one example of a secondary CTE program that prepares future entrants for the AFNR sector.

The need for technical education in industry and agriculture was noted as early as 1874 (Herren, 1985). “The Commission on Country Life” created by President Roosevelt in 1908, was focused on addressing the problems facing rural Americans (Herren, 1985). Due to the lack of any unified effort, it took several years to pass vocational education legislation (Herren, 1985). According to Friedel,

“In public education, vocational education has its beginning with agriculture and trades and industry for the boys, and homemaking education for girls. Vocational education included a combination of classroom instruction with hands-on laboratory learning and on-the-job training, supplemented with student organizations” (2011, p.38).

Since its start as vocational education, CTE in public schools has evolved into what we know it as today with the help of funding and legislation.

## **Career Technical Education Legislation**

Funding for vocational education in public schools was secured through the passage of the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 (PL 65-347). The Smith-Hughes Act created state boards for vocational education as well as the Federal Board for Vocational Education (PL 65-347; Talbert et al., 2014). The Federal Board for Vocational Education began to regulate the spending of federal funds as state boards drafted proposals for the funds each year. The Vocational Education Act of 1963 revised the Smith-Hughes Act and expanded vocational education to include a wider variety of agriculture outside of traditional production agriculture (PL 88-210; Talbert et al., 2014). Funds were also distributed differently through the Board of Education with a formula for spending that did not designate for specific areas of vocational education (Talbert et al., 2014). This act was revised in 1968 and 1976 to make vocational education more inclusive to students with disabilities and end gender discrimination (Talbert et al., 2014). Later revisions of this act in 1984, 1990, 1996, 1998, and 2006 are commonly known as the Carl Perkins Acts (Talbert et al., 2014).

Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act of 1984 pushed for economic competition through modernized vocational education (PL 98-524; Talbert et al., 2014). This legislation also sought to increase vocational education accessibility for all students as funding was set aside for those with disadvantages and disabilities (Talbert et al., 2014). Additional revisions were made with the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Act of 1990 (PL 101-392) as well as the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Acts of 1996 and 1998 (PL 105-332) to modify funding and integrate curriculum with standards equivalent to other areas of education (Talbert et al.,

2014). The Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (PL 209-270) officially integrated the change from Vocational Education to Career and Technical Education (CTE) as listed in federal legislation (Talbert et al., 2014). As progress was made in career and technical education, additional legislation was passed impacting school-based agricultural education and more specifically, the youth development component, FFA.

Although FFA was founded in 1928, with the passage of PL 740 in 1950 the U.S. Congress incorporated the National Future Farmers of America with a federal charter, which made FFA an integral part of agricultural education (Phipps et al., 2008). This charter also provided U.S. Department of Education employees to guide the organization making FFA an intracurricular component of school-based agricultural education programs; therefore, students must be enrolled in agricultural education coursework to obtain membership in FFA (Phipps et al., 2008). In 1988, a revision was made to change the name of the organization to the National FFA Organization to reflect the growth of the organization and to show that it encompassed more than traditional production agriculture (Phipps et al., 2008). Most recently, the federal charter was modernized in 2019 with the National FFA Organization's Federal Charter Amendments Act (National FFA Organization, 2019). This amendment updated the process for filling positions on the National FFA Board of Directors to include a wider variety of stakeholders, which were previously selected by the U.S. Department of Education. This amendment also gave more power to the National FFA Delegates to make changes without needing additional congressional amendments (National FFA Organization, 2019). As a student-led, intracurricular organization the FFA gives students the opportunity to develop as

leaders through their membership while applying the skills learned in the local agricultural education program.

### **National FFA Organization**

The FFA Mission, Vision, and Motto summarize the purpose and guide the programs of the student led National FFA Organization (FFA). The FFA Mission states “FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education” (Official FFA Manual, 2021, p. 6). The FFA Mission highlights three precepts: premier leadership, personal growth, and career success (Official FFA Manual, 2021). These precepts encompass the main purpose of the National FFA Organization and are addressed through various FFA experiences (Official FFA Manual, 2021). The FFA Vision further emphasizes the premier leadership precept stating, “FFA provides the next generation of leaders who will change the world” (Official FFA Manual, 2021, p. 7). The FFA Motto of “Learning to Do, Doing to Learn, Earning to Live, Living to Serve” highlights the experiential nature of the organization. These experiences occur through a variety of opportunities offered by local FFA chapters to meet the standards of a quality program.

There are 13 National Quality FFA Chapter Standards (NQCS) used to indicate the quality of a local FFA chapter.

The National Quality FFA Chapter Standards serve as a foundation for consistent delivery of quality FFA chapters across the nation focused on growing leaders, building communities, and strengthening agriculture. These standards are designed to be used by local advisors, administration, community partners and/or

stakeholders, FFA Alumni and Supporters and/or an assessment team to conduct an evaluation of the local FFA chapter and develop clear goals and objectives for chapter improvement. (p. 47)

These standards outline the keys to success for FFA chapters and guide the process for involving stakeholders in evaluation and goal setting (Official FFA Manual, 2021, pp. 47-48). The first indicator states all students in the agricultural education program should have the opportunity to be an FFA member, while the second and third indicators suggest students should have plans for leadership and personal development that reflect each component of the three-component model for agricultural education. Standard four indicates chapter members should update and approve a constitution and bylaws. Most pertinent to this study, indicator five states “FFA members are involved in the planning and implementation of a Program of Activities (POA)” (p.47). Regularly scheduled FFA meetings and an awards recognition program should be conducted by FFA members as outlined in indicators six and seven. The eighth indicator requires a chapter budget to be in place that outlines the finances required to carry out the POA. These chapter activities should be led by a trained officer team as stated in indicator nine. Community support is also outlined in indicators ten and eleven as FFA chapters should have an established support group and engaged stakeholders. Indicator 12 addresses the need for all students to have an SAE and career plan of study. The last indicator states a plan for recruitment and retention should be in place to maintain and increase enrollment of the agricultural education program. These standards are also used as criteria for Form 1 of the National Chapter Award.

### **Community Involvement**



Agricultural education researchers contend a comprehensive three-component model for agricultural education should take into consideration the local community of the agricultural education program (Croom, 2008; Hughes & Barrick, 1993; Official FFA Manual, 2021; Talbert et al., 2014). Barrick's AGED Model suggests the school and community surround the agricultural education program (Hughes & Barrick, 1993).

Classroom instruction as well as the application of skills and knowledge through SAE and FFA develop students for their future careers. The agricultural education program changes over time to meet the needs of the local community (Roberts & Ball, 2009). Community development has played a role in agricultural education programs and the FFA for many years (Hughes & Barrick, 1993; Israel & Hoover, 1996; Phipps et al., 2008).

Community involvement and support are also the cornerstones of a successful agricultural education program. Through interaction with advisory councils, school administrators, parents and local government agencies, agricultural education programs and FFA Chapters have the opportunity to become involved in community service projects. (Israel & Hoover, 1996, p.1)

The National FFA Organization promoted involvement in the local community. The Building Our American Communities (BOAC) Awards program (Israel & Hoover, 1996; Official FFA Manual, 2021; Phipps, 1972) was initiated in 1971. The BOAC program was integrated into the FFA National Chapter Award Program under the community development division in 1995 (Israel & Hoover, 1996). This addition to the NCA led chapters to incorporate community involvement into their local chapter (POA). Today, an

FFA chapter's POA is the road map for their year and contains all events that will take place to meet the goals of the SBAE program.

### **Program of Activities**

A chapter's Program of Activities (POA) is a document that is used for yearlong planning of all events that will take place at the local level (Official FFA Manual, 2021; Phipps, 1972). It has been suggested the POA should be developed through committee work guided by specific and measurable objectives (Official FFA Manual, 2021; Phipps, 1972). "A well-developed program of activities based on the interests and needs of the members and the organization as a whole usually results in a very worthy list of accomplishments" (Phipps, 1972, p. 265). Conversely, Phipps (1972) noted without a complete POA, a chapter would not be as successful, which emphasizes the need for a well-rounded and thoroughly planned POA.

The POA has been shown to be an indicator of a quality FFA program (Jenkins & Kitchel, 2009; Phipps, 1972). The POA outlines the FFA chapter's goals and calendar of events for the year in the divisions of Growing Leaders, Building Communities, and Strengthening Agriculture (Official FFA Manual, 2021). These divisions are the three major areas FFA chapters should focus on when setting yearly goals for the chapter, each major area is broken down into five specific quality standards (Official FFA Manual, 2021). These quality standards and divisions are used by FFA chapters to complete the National Chapter Award application.

### **National Chapter Award**

The purpose of the National Chapter Award (NCA) Program is "to recognize chapters that actively implement the mission and strategies of the organization" (Official

FFA Manual, 2021). FFA chapters are acknowledged for effective implementation of the POA. Particular emphasis is placed on the chapter's ability to address the National Quality Chapter Standards (NQCS) with a focus on Growing Leaders, Building Communities, and Strengthening Agriculture in their local chapter (Official FFA Manual, 2021). The NCA application consists of Form I and Form II, which serve two different purposes. Form I is used to assess the NQCS that were previously outlined and results in a superior rating for chapters who meet the standards' criteria. Form II is the longer form used to rank chapters based on the goals and implementation of the POA.

Each of the three NCA divisions consists of five quality standards that are used to guide chapters' POA events. Quality standard definitions are outlined in the Official FFA Manual (2021, p.47-49). In the Growing Leaders division, the quality standards: Leadership, Healthy Lifestyle, Scholarship, Personal Growth, and Career Success focus on developing students as leaders. Quality standards for the Building Communities division include the following: Environmental, Human Resources, Citizenship, Stakeholder Engagement, and Economic Development. These standards address needs of the local community that can be met by the FFA chapter. Strengthening Agriculture is the division focused on agricultural outreach activities performed by the FFA chapter. The quality standards for this division reflect the following: Support Group, Chapter Recruitment, Safety, Agricultural Advocacy, and Agricultural Literacy. FFA chapter POA activities are built around these divisions and quality standards and then used to complete the NCA application.

State FFA Associations award State Superior Chapter Awards to chapters that successfully complete Form I of the NCA application. Chapters completing Form II are

eligible to be rated as Bronze, Silver, or Gold. Each state can submit their top 3 chapters or 10% of their total number of chapters to the National FFA Organization to be considered for the NCA Program (National FFA Organization, 2022). At the national level, FFA chapters are rated a one, two, or three-star ranking with three-star signifying the highest ranking available for the NCA application score.

Chapters earning the three-star ranking are eligible to compete for the Premier Chapter and Model of Excellence awards. The Model of Excellence and Middle School Models of Excellence awards are selected from the top scoring applications at the national level. The top 10 scoring applications are finalists for Model of Excellence, while the top five are finalists for the Middle School Model of Excellence. These chapters participate in an interview process to select the Top Chapter for each area. Premier Chapter awards are awarded in the three divisions of Growing Leaders, Building Communities, and Strengthening Agriculture. Each division has 10 chapters selected for one innovative, unique, and impactful activity (National FFA Organization, 2022). Finalist chapters are also interviewed for selection of the Premier Chapter in each of the three divisions: Growing Leaders, Building Communities, and Strengthening Agriculture. Each of these finalists and winners are recognized nationally and published in the National Chapter Awards Recognition Guide (Official FFA Manual, 2021).

Teachers are facilitators of learning in all areas of the agricultural education program (Newcomb et al., 2004). As such, they value students' participation in FFA activities (Doss & Rayfield, 2021). SBAE teachers, in their role as FFA advisors, utilize FFA as a learning laboratory for leadership, career, and personal development of students enrolled in agricultural education (Newcomb et al., 2004). Advisors of successful FFA

chapters most commonly utilize a transformational leadership style to engage students in self-development (Nowak et al., 2019). Additionally, it has been stated, “The vehicle for planning and structuring the FFA as a laboratory for learning is the FFA program of activities” (Newcomb et al., 2004, p. 268). The chapter POA provides structure for learning through participation in the FFA. Therefore, FFA advisors should guide students in planning while ensuring that learning experiences for student development are occurring throughout the POA (Newcomb et al., 2004). These FFA advisors serve as mentors for FFA members throughout the process of carrying out the local chapter’s POA to facilitate learning that is experiential in nature (Jenkins & Kitchel, 2009; Nowak et al., 2019; Roberts, 2006; Roberts & Dyer, 2004). In their role as mentors for carrying out the POA, SBAE teachers/FFA advisors in this study served as a representative of their FFA chapter to report the process for participating in the National Chapter Award Program.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to provide detailed methods and procedures for the study. This study utilized a modified Delphi technique to gather consensus through the use of an expert panel. Email was used to distribute Qualtrics links for participant recruitment and three rounds of questions. Round 1 consisted of personal and professional characteristic questions and one open-ended question. Strategies and themes were discerned through qualitative content analysis in Round 1. A summated rating scale was utilized to reach a consensus of agreement in the second and third rounds.

#### **Internal Review Board**

The Internal Review Board (IRB) process for Oklahoma State University was followed by the researcher. An IRB application was submitted that included the purpose, objectives, and methodology for the study. The application was then reviewed and accepted by the IRB at Oklahoma State University (Appendix A).

#### **Research Design**

This study was descriptive in nature and employed a survey research design

utilizing the Delphi technique (Sackman, 1975). Linstone and Turoff (1975) described the Delphi technique as a research design that includes four phases. The first phase explores the subject and allows participants to contribute information that they deem appropriate. The second phase seeks to determine an understanding of how the entire group views an issue. If significant disagreement is determined, the third phase is used to explore the disagreement and determine reasons for differences. The fourth phase is a final evaluation of all the information gathered (Brady, 2015).

A modified Delphi technique was used to conduct this study by utilizing online Qualtrics instruments and forming an expert panel to create a list of strategies used to implement the NCA Program (Dalkey, 1969). The Delphi method has been used frequently in agricultural education research (Easterly & Myers, 2017; Jenkins & Kitchel, 2009; Lundry et al., 2015; Ramsey & Edwards, 2011). The Delphi technique involves “the repeated individual questioning of the experts (by interview or questionnaire) and avoids direct confrontation of the experts with one another” (Dalkey & Helmer, 1963, p. 458). This technique is used as a research method to gather the consensus of a group of experts, rather than accepting an opinion of one randomly selected expert (Dalkey, 1969). This use of group response increases reliability of the expert opinion (Dalkey, 1969). One expert panel consisting of SBAE teachers/advisors was identified for this study.

Validity is the most important characteristic a test or measuring instrument can hold or exhibit. Validity is the degree to which a test measures what it purports to measure and, consequently, permits appropriate interpretation of scores (Gay, et al., 2006). Specifically, the investigator was interested in the face and content validity of the

questionnaire. Face validity refers to the degree that a test or instrument “appears” to measure what it claims to measure and content validity can be determined by expert judgment (Gay et al., 2006). Accordingly, a panel of experts of agricultural education faculty members at Oklahoma State University established both face and content validity for the initial questionnaire used in this study.

Gay et al. (2006) defined reliability as “the degree to which a test consistently measures whatever it is measuring” (p. 139). For responses received during Round One of the study, reliability was established by using coding by majority rule, i.e., an example of a *posteriori* procedure that involves independent coding of a data set by three or more persons (Montgomery & Crittenden, 1977) was used. This type of thematic analysis is widely utilized in qualitative Delphi studies by individual researchers identifying themes, discussing themes and then sending themes back to participants for approval in the next round (Brady, 2015). In addition, Dalkey, et al. (1972) indicated a group size of 13 was needed for reliability with a correlation coefficient of .9. Therefore, a group size of twelve to fifteen was maintained for this study. Sutphin (1990) suggested the sample should be large enough to obtain the amount of expertise necessary to effectively conduct the study. Beyond this number, the sample size should be held to a minimum to reduce cost and an overabundance of data, which becomes cumbersome and yields no additional information for the study. The inclusion of 17 panelists contributed to the reliability of the multiple round Delphi procedure used in this study.

The utility of the Delphi is the structured approach used to identify consensus among the panel of experts. However, the researcher is charged with developing decision



rules that guide the study. To that end, the researcher chose to include a qualitative approach to allow panelists to contribute comments or suggestions they deemed appropriate and to inform the development of questionnaires needed for the multiple round Delphi. Round 1 utilized coding by majority rule (Montgomery & Crittenden, 1977) to identify themes that framed statements in round 2 and 3. Items were independently analyzed and coded by faculty and graduate students. All codes were brought together to discern themes within the panelists' statements (Glesne, 2016, Saldana, 2009). To establish consensus, panelists were asked to identify their level of agreement using the following summated scale: 1 = *Strongly Disagree*, 2 = *Disagree*, 3 = *Somewhat Disagree*, 4 = *Somewhat Agree*, 5 = *Agree*, 6 = *Strongly Agree*. Space was provided at the end of each section to share additional strategies as deemed appropriate. The final round was executed to refine the consensus of items. The researcher elected to set the level of consensus for an item at 75% agreement. Therefore, items that received a score of "5" (Agree) or "6" (Strongly Agree) by 75% of the respondents were considered items for which consensus was reached. Items for which less than 51% of the respondents scored the item a "5" or "6" were removed from the study.

### **Delphi Panel**

The purposefully selected group reflected SBAE teachers serving as FFA advisors for the 77 FFA chapters in NAAE Region II that received a three-star ranking in the NCA Program more than once during the last five years as reported by the National FFA Organization.

Dalkey (1969) encouraged the use of a panel of selected experts to help identify consensus around a particular phenomenon. To come to consensus regarding strategies implemented by FFA chapters to complete the NCA application, researchers selected panelists based on specific professional characteristics. First, we expected panelists to be an active SBAE teacher/advisor in NAAE Region II, which is composed of Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Texas. NAAE Region II reflects seven U.S. States with differing levels of participation in the National Chapter Award Program. Region II was selected for this study due to the familiarity of the researcher with two of the seven state FFA associations in the region.

Second, we expected panelists to have completed the NCA Application and been recognized with a three-star ranking for at least two of the last five years. It was important to identify experts who have completed the NCA application and been recognized with a three-star ranking at the National level for two of the last five years. National FFA reports data in five-year intervals via a cloud storage platform allowing researcher access to this data (National FFA Organization, 2022).

Third, we expected panelists to have a minimum of three years' teaching experience. This ensured the panelist had been through at least two complete calendar years of completing the National Chapter Award.

Fourth, in cases of multiple teacher programs, only one advisor per FFA chapter could serve on the panel of experts. This criterion ensured the teacher/advisor with the most experience with NCA would be included on the panel. The other teachers in the chapter were encouraged to collaborate with the assigned teacher for their FFA chapter.

This was the researcher's attempt to avoid duplicate answers while gathering an accurate response for the represented FFA chapters.

### **Data Collection**

Data were collected with online instruments administered with Qualtrics to maintain anonymity and reduce the chance of individuals dominating the group (Dalkey et al., 1973). Three rounds of data were collected, and results were summarized between each round. The statistical group response was used to combine the responses in a way that all panelists' opinions are represented (Dalkey et al., 1973). Specifically, frequency and percentages were used to determine consensus for items.

To initiate recruitment, an electronic mail message was sent to all SBAE teachers advising the FFA chapters (77) identified for this study. (Appendix C). A follow-up to the recruitment email was sent after one week (Appendix D). Following the email invitation, experts received additional information that summarized the study, outlined the consent process, and offered the initial, round one open-ended question. According to Dillman (2000), open-ended questions receive more complete answers than with paper questionnaires. An electronic notice from the researcher containing a hyperlink to access the questionnaire was sent for each round. The initial questionnaire for the expert panel was created by the researcher and developed using Microsoft Word®.

In Round One, panelists were asked to identify strategies FFA chapters implement to achieve a three-star ranking on the NCA Application. On February 22, 2022, data collection for Round One of the Delphi began (Appendix E). Nonrespondents were sent a

follow up email after one week and panelists completed the questionnaire by March 7, 2022 (Appendix F). Seventeen panelists met the reliability threshold set by Dalkey (1969). Personal and professional characteristics were collected in the first-round questionnaire. Characteristics of interest included: gender, teacher certification pathway, state where teacher is employed, number of years as an agricultural education teacher, number of agricultural education instructors in their agricultural education department, number of years competing in the NCA Program, number of years receiving a three-star ranking, type of NCA Program honors received, level of state support for the NCA application, and how they learned about the NCA Program. One open-ended question was used to obtain feedback from the expert panel: What strategies does your FFA chapter implement to achieve a three-star ranking in the National Chapter Award Program? Follow up email messages were sent to those who had not responded after one week (Appendix G).

The panelists who participated in Round One were emailed the Round Two questionnaire (Appendix H) on March 17, 2022. The Round Two questionnaire reflected the four themes that emerged post coding of the Round One items and served as a framework for assignment of the items resulting from Round One (Appendix J). After one week of data collection, a follow-up email was sent to nonrespondents (Appendix I).

The Round Three questionnaire focused on developing consensus by asking panelists to rate their level of agreement on those items for which at least 51% but less than 75% of panelists selected agree or strongly agree in round two (Appendix M). The

Round Three questionnaire included the percentage of panelists who indicated “Agree” (5) or “Strongly Agree” (6) for that strategy in Round 2.

### **Data Analysis**

The following decision rules were followed to analysis the data and determine if items met consensus while the iterative Delphi process was conducted. The responses to the open-ended question “What strategies does your FFA chapter implement to achieve a three-star ranking in the National Chapter Award Program?” were initially treated as qualitative data.

Responses from Round One were collated and classified using a modified version of the open-ended question coding technique developed by Montgomery & Crittenden (1997). Statements produced by the expert panel were independently classified to produce a list of statements for the round two questionnaires. Coding yielded four themes that served as a framework for development of the round two questionnaire.

To establish consensus, panelists were asked to identify their level of agreement using the following summated scale: 1 = *Strongly Disagree*, 2 = *Disagree*, 3 = *Somewhat Disagree*, 4 = *Somewhat Agree*, 5 = *Agree*, 6 = *Strongly Agree*. Space was provided at the end of each section to share additional strategies panelists believed to have been overlooked in Round One. A final round was executed to refine the consensus of items. The researcher elected to set the level of consensus for an item at 75% agreement. Therefore, items that received a score of “5” (Agree) or “6” (Strongly Agree) by 75% of the respondents were considered items for which consensus was reached. Items for which

less than 51% of the respondents scored the item a “5” or “6” were removed from the study.

The data were analyzed using Qualtrics. Frequency distributions and percentages are calculated via the “results” feature found in the Qualtrics online survey platform. For each item, the frequency distribution valid percentage was used to determine if the item reached consensus or was “unstable” and should be removed from the study. The undecided items from Round Two (i.e., those items that < 51 % of the panelists scored a “5” or “6”) were removed from the study and not included in the round three questionnaire. The items featured on the Round Three questionnaire reflected items panelists found to be > than 51% but < 75% after completing the Round Two questionnaire.

## CHAPTER IV

### FINDINGS

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter was to provide the findings of this research. A description of the expert panelists is provided to further describe the panel and their background. In addition, tables are provided to highlight the findings provided by the panel of experts.

#### **Personal and Professional Characteristics of the Delphi Panelists**

A series of questions included in the Round 1 instrument were used to collect data pertaining to the personal and professional characteristics of the 17 panelists. As determined from the National FFA National Chapter Award results, all panelists' chapters had received a three-star ranking at least twice in the last five years. Panelists were asked about their personal and professional experience as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1***Personal and Professional Characteristics of SBAE Teacher/Advisor Panelists (N=17)*

Characteristics	<i>f</i>	%
Gender		
Female	11	64.71
Male	6	35.29
Teacher Certification Pathway		
Traditionally Certified	16	94.12
Alternatively Certified	1	5.88
State		
Oklahoma	5	29.41
Kansas	4	23.53
Texas	4	23.53
Louisiana	3	17.65
Colorado	1	5.88
Years teaching SBAE		
3 to 5 years	3	17.65
6 to 10 years	7	41.18
11 to 15 years	2	11.76
16 to 20 years	0	0.00
21 to 25 years	2	11.76
25 to 41 years	3	17.65
Number of SBAE instructors in department		
Single Teacher	5	29.41
Two Teacher	4	23.53
Three Teacher	5	29.41
More than three teachers	3	17.65

The majority of panelists were female, with only 35.29% of panelists identifying as male. Only one of the 17 teachers was alternatively certified, meaning they did not complete a teacher preparation program and entered the profession with an alternative teaching credential. Five states were represented on the panel with Arkansas and New Mexico not having any chapters qualify for the study as no chapters in these states were ranked a three-star at the national level more than once in the last five years of results. Oklahoma had the most panelists (5) while Kansas and Texas each had (4). This finding aligned with NCA participation in Region II.



Regarding participation in the National Chapter Award Program, most of the panelists (13) competed on the national level for less than 10 years. The majority (64.71%) advised a national three-star chapter for five years or less. Chapters advised by the panelists had been recognized as a Model of Excellence Finalist five times with none of them being named the Model of Excellence Overall winner. Additionally, chapters were selected as Premier Chapter Finalists (Growing Leaders, Building Communities, and Strengthening Agriculture) six times with only two chapters being named the Top Premier Chapter (Growing Leaders and Strengthening Agriculture). In fact, most of the chapters (11) advised by panelists received no additional National Chapter Award honors leaving six chapters to have received the 13 honors recorded in Table 2. Panelists reported state level support for the NCA Program was provided by a committee of teachers most of the time (52.94%) with some (5) support offered by state staff in the form of individualized feedback (29.41%). Advisors learned about the award process by peers (co-teachers and other SBAE teachers) 47% or near peers (state staff) 23.53%. Interestingly, State FFA Association websites, National FFA Convention, National FFA staff, as well as social media did not serve as points of information for the panelists, see Table 2.

**Table 2**

*National Chapter Award Program Participation by SBAE Teacher/Advisor Panelists (N=17)*

Characteristic	<i>f</i>	%
Years competing in NCA at the national level		
0 to 5 years	8	47.06
6 to 10 years	5	29.41
11 to 15 years	0	0.00
16 to 20 years	2	11.76
21 to 25 years	0	0.00
(continued)		

More than 25 years	2	11.76
Years advising a National three-star ranked chapter		
3 to 5 years	11	64.71
6 to 10 years	2	11.76
11 to 15 years	1	5.88
16 to 20 years	1	5.88
21 to 25 years	1	5.88
More than 25 years	1	5.88
National Chapter Award Honors received		
Model of Excellence Finalist	5	29.41
Model of Excellence Overall Winner	0	0.00
Middle School Model of Excellence Finalist	0	0.00
Middle School Model of Excellence Winner	0	0.00
Premier Chapter Finalist- Growing Leaders	1	5.88
Top Premier Chapter- Growing Leaders	1	5.88
Premier Chapter Finalist- Building Communities	1	5.88
Top Premier Chapter- Building Communities	0	0.00
Premier Chapter Finalist- Strengthening Agriculture	4	23.53
Top Premier Chapter- Strengthening Agriculture	1	5.88
None	11	64.71
State support offered for NCA		
State staff gives individualized feedback	5	29.41
A committee of teachers gives feedback	9	52.94
Professional development workshops are provided by state staff	2	11.76
Professional development is offered by other teachers	5	29.41
Online resources are provided	5	29.41
None	3	17.65
How did you learn about the NCA?		
National FFA Staff	0	0.00
National FFA website	1	5.88
National Convention	0	0.00
State Staff	4	23.53
State Association website	0	0.00
State Convention	2	11.76
Co-teacher	4	23.53
Other teachers outside of your program	4	23.53
College coursework	1	5.88
Professional development workshop	1	5.88
Social media	0	0.00

*Note.* “National Chapter Award Honors received” question allowed panelists to select more than one answer, therefore this category will not total to 100%.

### Round 1 Findings

From the list of National FFA results, 77 chapters from NAAE Region II were identified as receiving a three-star ranking at least twice in the last five years and were sent an email request to participate. Of these 77 chapters, 29 teachers consented to participate in the study and 17 completed Round 1 for a 59% response rate. Findings from round 1 of the modified Delphi yielded four themes identified by the researcher. The themes were used to categorize the strategies offered by the panelists to complete the National Chapter Award Application: (1) Planning and Resources, (2) Implementation, (3) Application Writing, and (4) Reflection. Fifty strategy statements were assigned to these four themes to be sent back in Round 2 to assess panelists' agreement and potential consensus regarding strategies identified in Round 1. These statements can be found in Table 3.

**Table 3**

*National Chapter Award Program Strategies Identified by SBAE Teachers/Advisors in Round 1 (N=50)*

Theme	Strategy Statement
Planning and Resources	Develop a systematic schedule
	Develop a year-long plan for activities
	Schedule major activities across the school year
	Host an officer retreat to generate activity ideas
	Set up working committees
	Establish SMART goals
	Develop action plans
	Utilize a Program of Activities
	Utilize Model of Innovation/Excellence winners as examples
	Identify locally relevant activities
	Utilize FFA activity planning sheets
	Utilize AET Resources
	Utilize FFA NCA Rubrics
	Identify deadlines
(continued)	

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Implementing Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan one activity per standard</li> <li>Utilize the 15 quality standards as guides for activities</li> <li>Utilize alumni volunteers</li> <li>Identify activities that provide a service to students, school and community</li> <li>Volunteer to judge applications at the state level</li> <li>Think big</li> <li>Use national chapter application as template for the chapter POA</li> <li>Committee accountability</li> <li>Officer investment</li> <li>Persistence</li> <li>Be open to opportunities that arise throughout the year</li> <li>Student ownership</li> <li>Consider student impact</li> <li>Weekly officer meetings focused on NCA progress</li> <li>Take/capture photographs (action shots)</li> <li>Committee chair develops a draft report of the activity</li> <li>Teacher reviews and reflects on draft report</li> <li>Involve as many students as possible</li> </ul>
Application Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilize divisions and quality standards</li> <li>Follow the NCA Rubric</li> <li>Write/develop application throughout the year</li> <li>Write action plans</li> <li>Select quality pictures</li> <li>Integrate proper grammar</li> <li>Incorporate state level judging feedback</li> <li>Reinforce writing skills</li> <li>Select a uniform writing format</li> <li>Assign student teams to complete portions of the application</li> <li>Officers complete the application</li> <li>Completed application reviewed by multiple SBAE teachers</li> <li>Completed application reviewed by English teacher</li> </ul>
Reflecting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review the National Chapter Awards Recognition Guide</li> <li>Gather stakeholder feedback</li> <li>Assess program needs</li> <li>(continued)</li> </ul>

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Guide student reflection  
Perform teacher reflection

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*Note.* These panelist statements and themes were used to create the round two instrument (Appendix J).

### **Round 2 Findings**

Round 2 reflected an 82.35% response rate. Fourteen of the 17 panelists that responded to Round 1 participated in Round 2. Consensus was met if 75% or more of the 14 panelists agreed with the statement by selecting (5) *Agree* or (6) *Strongly Agree*. Panelists identified 21 strategy statements related to the theme, *Planning and Resources*. Three strategies reached 100% agreement i.e., schedule major activities across the school year, identify deadlines, and identify activities that provide a service to students, school and community. Most panelists (92.86%) agreed develop a systematic schedule, develop a year-long plan for activities, host an officer retreat to generate activity ideas, identify locally relevant activities, utilize FFA NCA rubrics, and volunteer to judge applications at the state level are all strategies that lead to a three-star ranking. Utilize a Program of Activities and use the National Chapter application as a template for the chapter POA both were strategies agreed upon by 85.71% of the panelists. Establish SMART goals, develop action plans, utilize the 15 quality standards as guides for activities and think big were agreed upon strategies by 78.57% of the panelists (see Table 4). Plan one activity per standard, set up working committees, and utilize alumni volunteers were all strategies between 51-75% agreement, therefore, they were added to the Round Three Instrument (see Table 5). Utilize Model of Innovation/Excellence winners as examples, utilize FFA activity planning sheets, and utilize AET resources strategies received less than 51% agreement and were removed from contention as shown in Table 6.

**Table 4**

*National Chapter Award Program Planning and Resources Strategies Identified by SBAE Teachers/Advisors in Round 2 (N=15)*

Planning and Resources Strategy	<i>f</i>	%
Schedule major activities across the school year	14	100.00
Identify deadlines	14	100.00
Identify activities that provide a service to students, school and community	14	100.00
Develop a systematic schedule	13	92.86
Develop a year-long plan for activities	13	92.86
Host an officer retreat to generate activity ideas	13	92.86
Identify locally relevant activities	13	92.86
Utilize FFA NCA Rubrics	13	92.86
Volunteer to judge applications at the state level	13	92.86
Utilize a Program of Activities	12	85.71
Use national chapter application as template for the chapter POA	12	85.71
Establish SMART goals	11	78.57
Develop action plans	11	78.57
Utilize the 15 quality standards as guides for activities	11	78.57
Think big	11	78.57

**Table 5**

*National Chapter Award Program Planning and Resources Strategies Sent to Round 3 (N=3)*

Planning and Resources Strategy	<i>f</i>	%
Plan one activity per standard	10	71.43
Set up working committees	9	64.29
Utilize alumni volunteers	8	57.14

**Table 6**

*National Chapter Award Program Planning and Resources Strategies Removed from the Study in Round 2 (N=3)*

Planning and Resources Strategy	<i>f</i>	%
Utilize Model of Innovation/Excellence winners as examples	7	50.00
Utilize FFA activity planning sheets	6	42.86
Utilize AET Resources	6	42.86

The theme *Implementing Activities*, yielded an additional three strategies that reached 100% agreement i.e., officer investment, persistence, and be open to opportunities that arise throughout the year. Student ownership was identified as an agreed upon strategy by 85.72% of panelists, while 82.85% agreed that take/capture photographs (action shots) was a strategy for implementing activities. Committee accountability and consider student impact were two strategies with a 78.57% agreement level (see Table 7). Involving as many students as possible was a strategy identified by 71.43% of the panelists, while teacher reviews and reflects on draft report received 64.28% indicating that these two strategies were added to the Round 3 Instrument (see Table 8). The final two strategies, committee chair develops a draft report of the activity and weekly officer meetings focused on NCA progress did not move forward as they were not agreed upon by more than 51% of the panelists see Table 9.

**Table 7**

*National Chapter Award Program Implementing Activities Strategies Identified by SBAE Teachers/Advisors in Round 2 (N=7)*

Implementing Activities Strategy	<i>f</i>	%
Officer investment	14	100.00
Persistence	14	100.00
Be open to opportunities that arise throughout the year	14	100.00
Take/capture photographs (action shots)	13	92.85
Student ownership	12	85.71
Committee accountability	11	78.57
Consider student impact	11	78.57

**Table 8**

*National Chapter Award Program Implementing Activities Strategies Sent to Round 3 (N=2)*

Implementing Activities Strategy	<i>f</i>	%
Involve as many students as possible	10	71.43
Teacher reviews and reflects on draft report	9	64.29

**Table 9**

*National Chapter Award Program Implementing Activities Strategies Removed from the Study in Round 2 (N=2)*

Implementing Activities Strategy	<i>f</i>	%
Committee chair develops a draft report of the activity	7	50.00
Weekly officer meetings focused on NCA progress	5	35.71

*Application Writing* themed strategies had the most consensus as no statements were removed from consideration in Round Two. Integrate proper grammar, follow the NCA Rubric, and select a uniform writing format all reached 100% agreement. Three additional statements had a majority agreement (92.86%) from the panel i.e., utilize divisions and quality standards, select quality pictures, and reinforce writing skills. Assign student teams to complete portions of the application (85.72%), write/develop application throughout the year (78.57%), and incorporate state level judging feedback (78.57%) met consensus and were accepted strategies. However, write action plans (64.29%), completed application reviewed by multiple SBAE teachers (57.14%), and completed application reviewed by English teacher (57.15%) did not meet the initial consensus threshold of > 75%, they remained in contention for Round 3 as they were above 51% agreement, see Table 10-11.

**Table 10**

*National Chapter Award Program Application Writing Strategies Identified by SBAE Teachers/Advisors in Round 2 (N=9)*

Application Writing Strategy	<i>f</i>	%
Integrate proper grammar	14	100.00
Follow the NCA Rubric	14	100.00
Select a uniform writing format	14	100.00
Utilize divisions and quality standards	13	92.86
(continued)		



Select quality pictures	13	92.86
Reinforce writing skills	13	92.86
Assign student teams to complete portions of the application	12	85.71
Write/develop application throughout the year	11	78.57
Incorporate state level judging feedback	11	78.57

**Table 11**

*National Chapter Award Program Application Writing Strategies Sent to Round 3 (N=4)*

Application Writing Strategy	<i>f</i>	%
Officers complete the application	10	71.43
Write action plans	9	64.29
Completed application reviewed by multiple SBAE teachers	8	57.14
Completed application reviewed by English teacher	8	57.14

As shown in Table 12-13, the theme *Reflecting*, only yielded five strategy statements with only one, assess program needs, meeting consensus (78.57%). The next three strategies of review the National Chapter Awards Recognition Guide, guide student reflection, and perform teacher reflection were sent back to the panel in Round 3 as they met 71.43% agreement. The final statement, gather stakeholder feedback, received agreement from 35.71% of panelists, therefore, it was not included in Round 3.

**Table 12**

*National Chapter Award Program Reflecting Strategies Identified by SBAE Teachers/Advisors in Round 2 (N=1)*

Reflecting Strategy	<i>f</i>	%
Assess program needs	11	78.57

**Table 13**

*National Chapter Award Program Reflecting Strategies Sent to Round 3 (N=3)*

Reflecting Strategy	<i>f</i>	%
Review the National Chapter Awards Recognition Guide	10	71.43
Guide student reflection	10	71.43

(continued)

Perform teacher reflection	10	71.43
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**Table 14**

*National Chapter Award Program Reflecting Strategies Removed from the Study in Round 2 (N=1)*

Reflecting Strategy	<i>f</i>	%
Gather stakeholder feedback	5	35.71

### Round 3 Findings

Twelve strategy statements were included in Round 3 as they received between 51-75% agreement. The Round 3 questionnaire was reviewed by 13 of the 14 panelists reporting in Round 2 for a response rate of 92.86%. The strategy statement with the majority agreement level (92.31%) was plan one activity per standard in the *Planning and Resources* theme. Set up working committees and utilize alumni volunteers both were dropped from the list of strategies as they had 61.54% and 53.85% respectively as shown in Table 8. In the *Implementing Activities* theme, involve as many students as possible was added to the list of agreed upon strategies with 76.92% panelist acceptance. Teacher reviews and reflects on draft report did not meet consensus as only 61.54% of panelists agreed on this strategy. The remaining *Application Writing* strategy statements did not meet consensus as write action plans had the highest agreement level (69.23%). Officers complete the application followed with only 61.54% agreement. Additionally, completed application reviewed by multiple SBAE teachers as well as by English teacher both only received 46.14% agreement from the panel. Each of the *Reflecting* theme strategies met consensus in Round 3 as shown in Table 8. These strategies were, perform teacher reflection (92.31%), review the National Chapter Awards Recognition Guide (84.62%), and guide student reflection (84.62%).

**Table 15**

*National Chapter Award Program Strategies Identified by SBAE Teachers/Advisors in Round 3 (N=5)*

Theme	Strategy Statement	<i>f</i>	%
Planning and Resources	Plan one activity per standard	12	92.31
	Involve as many students as possible	10	76.92
Reflecting	Perform teacher reflection	12	92.31
	Review the NCA Recognition Guide	11	84.62
	Guide student reflection	11	84.62

### Summary

Consensus was met when 75% or more of panelists agreed with the statement by selecting (5) *Agree* or (6) *Strongly Agree* (Lundry et al., 2014; Ramsey & Edwards, 2011). Statements with 51-75% agreement were added to the round three instrument while those with less than 50% agreement were dropped from the study (Jenkins & Kitchel, 2009; Lundry et al., 2014; Ramsey & Edwards, 2011). After three rounds of a modified Delphi, panelists identified 37 strategies framed by four themes. Sixteen strategies related to *Program Planning and Resources*, eight strategies supporting *Implementation of Activities*, *Application Writing* garnered nine strategies and *Reflecting* yielded four strategies used to implement the NCA Program, see Table 16.

**Table 16**

*Final National Chapter Award Program Strategies Identified by SBAE Teachers/Advisors (N = 37)*

Theme	Strategy Statement	Agreement (%)
Planning and Resources	Schedule major activities across the school year	100
	Identify deadlines	100
	(continued)	

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	Identify activities that provide a service to students, school, and community	100
	Develop a systematic schedule	93
	Develop a year-long plan for activities	93
	Host an officer retreat to generate activity ideas	93
	Identify locally relevant activities	93
	Utilize FFA NCA Rubrics	93
	Volunteer to judge applications at the state level	93
	Plan one activity per standard	92
	Utilize a Program of Activities	86
	Use national chapter application as template for the chapter POA	86
	Utilize the 15 quality standards as guides for activities	79
	Establish SMART goals	79
	Develop action plans	79
	Think big	79
Implementing Activities		
	Officer investment	100
	Persistence	100
	Be open to opportunities that arise throughout the year	100
	Student ownership	86
	Take/capture photographs (action shots)	83
	Committee accountability	79
	Consider student impact	79
	Involve as many students as possible	77
Application Writing		
	Follow the NCA Rubric	100
	Integrate proper grammar	100
	Select a uniform writing format	100
	Utilize divisions and quality standards	93
	Select quality pictures	93
	Reinforce writing skills	93
	Assign student teams to complete portions of the application	86
	Write/develop application throughout the year	79
	Incorporate state level judging feedback	79
Reflecting		
	(continued)	

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Perform teacher reflection	92
Review the National Chapter Awards Recognition Guide	85
Guide student reflection	85
Assess program needs	79

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## CHAPTER V

## CONCLUSION

### **Introduction**

This study yielded 37 strategies that could be utilized by SBAE teachers to reach a three-star ranking in the NCA Program. Strategies were categorized into four themes: (1) Planning & Resources, (2) Implementing Activities, (3) Application Writing, and (4) Reflecting. These strategies have the potential to serve as a resource for FFA chapters competing in the NCA program. The themes suggest a potential approach to completing the NCA application that reflects the experiential nature of the comprehensive model of school-based agricultural education and supports the National FFA Organization mission, vision and motto. Concomitantly, the themes identify strategies that could align with the experiential learning process.

According to Newcomb et al. (2004) the FFA component of the three-circle model has potential to serve as a learning lab enabling learning to do, doing to learn, learning to live and living to serve to frame the experiences and activities reflected in the chapter program of activities. The identification of themes that potentially guide the NCA process has the potential to increase application submissions, particularly in states that have not submitted applications that received a three-star ranking over the past five years.

The strategies that reinforce each of the themes reflect real-world concrete experiences FFA chapters could implement thus entering or beginning an experiential learning opportunity for FFA members engaged in said activities. FFA chapters are led by an FFA Advisor(s) charged with structuring the learning opportunities offered in the FFA laboratory. The structure buttressed by the experiential learning cycle reinforces findings offered by Baker et al. (2012) that experiential learning occurs in all components of the three-circle model of agricultural education e.g., the strategy *Utilize a Program of Activities*, suggests the process of critical thinking, problem solving, and teamwork be employed to develop a POA. Phipps (1972) suggested three questions should follow any concrete experience: (a) What happened?, (b) So what do I conclude?, (c) Now what do I do? Throughout the NCA Program, students are guided by their FFA advisor to consider and answer these questions while working to conceptualize abstract ideas, conduct concrete experiences, actively experiment, and reflect.

### *Planning*

- Schedule major activities across the school year
- Identify deadlines
- Identify activities that provide a service to students, school, and community
- Develop a systematic schedule
- Develop a year-long plan for activities
- Host an officer retreat to generate activity ideas
- Identify locally relevant activities
- Utilize FFA NCA Rubrics
- Volunteer to judge applications at the state level

- Plan one activity per standard
- Utilize a Program of Activities
- Use national chapter application as template for the chapter POA
- Utilize the 15 quality standards as guides for activities
- Establish SMART goals
- Develop action plans
- Think big

### *Implementation*

- Officer investment
- Persistence
- Be open to opportunities that arise throughout the year
- Student ownership
- Take/capture photographs (action shots)
- Committee accountability
- Consider student impact
- Involve as many students as possible

### *Application Writing*

- Follow the NCA Rubric
- Integrate proper grammar
- Select a uniform writing format
- Utilize divisions and quality standards
- Select quality pictures
- Reinforce writing skills



- Assign student teams to complete portions of the application
- Write/develop application throughout the year
- Incorporate state level judging feedback

### *Reflecting*

- Perform teacher reflection
- Review the National Chapter Awards Recognition Guide
- Guide student reflection
- Assess program needs

### **Conclusions**

The four themes representing strategies for competing in the NCA program are *Planning & Resources, Implementing Activities, Application Writing, and Reflecting*. Conclusions will be presented for each theme.

The *Planning and Resources* theme revealed teachers are focused on providing service activities that impact the local community, which aligns with the FFA mission and purpose i.e., provide opportunities for students to become productive citizens. Some teachers do not fully utilize a Program of Activities (POA) and others do not use the NCA as a template for the POA. There are teachers who are unaware of the purpose of the POA or its potential impact on the effectiveness of the NCA application. Utilizing the 15 quality standards as guides for activities and establishing SMART goals, which are sections reflected on the application rubric, are not practiced by some teachers. Panelists report the following planning tools are not frequently used: Models of Innovation/Excellence winners as examples, FFA activity planning sheets, and AET resources. The National FFA organization places value on these resources as they are

highlighted on web pages and social media, however, panelists rejected these strategies after the second round of the modified Delphi. Should National FFA re-evaluate resources designed to support the award process? Additionally, setting up working committees and utilizing alumni volunteers are not strategies used by all teachers. Could resistance to including students and outside stakeholders contribute to teacher stress?

Most strategies in the *Implementing Activities* theme reveal student involvement and engagement are crucial to having successful activities. Officer investment, persistence, and being open to opportunities that arise throughout the year are strategies for implementing the events and activities necessary for completing the NCA. However, while most teachers require student ownership in implementing activities, there are still those who do not deem it necessary. Committee accountability, considering student impact, and involving as many students as possible are strategies that assist chapters in implementing activities. Finally, developing draft reports of the activities, teacher reviews and reflects on draft reports, and weekly officer meetings focused on application progress are not widely used strategies. Do advisors recognize the missed opportunities for experiential learning that could be highlighted through these activities?

In the theme *Application Writing*, following the NCA rubric along with integrating proper grammar and selecting a uniform format are vital strategies used by FFA chapters. Incorporating state level judging feedback is not a strategy for all chapters and may indicate judging feedback at the state level is not seen as valuable to teachers from all states. While utilizing the NCA Divisions and Quality Standards is a strategy for writing the NCA, it is not a planning tool for all chapters. Including images that feature students in action and selecting quality pictures are important strategies for both

*Implementing Activities* and *Application Writing*. This indicates some strategies are used throughout different stages of participation in the NCA program. Students participating in the application process is a practice most chapters implement. Writing/developing the application throughout the year is also a strategy utilized by teachers. *Application Writing* strategies such as writing action plans and having officers complete the application are not seen as integral strategies by all teachers. Additionally, having completed applications reviewed by other SBAE teachers and English teachers is recognized as a strategy by less than 50% of panelists.

*Reflecting* was the least cited theme with only four accepted strategies.

Performing teacher reflection is seen as the most important strategy for reflection. The National Chapter Awards Recognition Guide is a tool used for reflection by some teachers. Equally important, some teachers do guide student reflection. Assessing program needs is not a strategy utilized by all teachers for reflecting on their NCA program participation each year. Gathering stakeholder feedback is not seen as a relevant practice for *Reflecting* on the NCA process for most teachers. Perhaps the most interesting finding revealed by the panelists lies with the items that did not meet consensus or required an additional round to meet consensus.

Items that national leaders would point to as critical to the NCA application process are not seen as strategies for completing the application by panelists. Additionally, the responses that failed to meet consensus reflect missed learning opportunities that could lead to reflection and active experimentation in a real-world environment which trends away from the mission and vision of the National FFA Organization.

## **Implications**

Participation in the NCA has the potential to highlight experiential learning. Specifically, the year-to-year planning, implementation, reporting, and reflection on the process for those chapters that consistently receive a three-star ranking can be aligned with the elements noted in Kolb's experiential learning cycle (1984). Teachers may not be aware of the resources available from National FFA and AET. Additionally, they may not know how to access updated information related to the NCA program. For example, the Models of Innovation (MOI) award was updated to Premier Chapter in 2017, but teachers still referenced it as MOI. These resources are highlighted in FFA publications, state websites and professional development sessions, however, they were not used by this expert panel suggesting these resources need revisions to be beneficial to teachers. While budgeting is highlighted in the NQCS and NCA resources produced by FFA and AET, there was no mention of budgeting in any round of this research study.

Some teachers did not see value in frequent feedback from committee chairs and officer teams. Teachers saw the value of officer investment in the process and committee accountability, but they may need more instruction on facilitating officer meetings and having students draft the application results prior to writing the complete application. While resources for these strategies are located on the FFA website and in other teacher created resources, all teachers may not be aware of the resources or how to access them. Albeit even though some NCA Divisions and Quality Standards are centered on alumni support and community stakeholder engagement, teachers may not have the knowledge, skills, or access to gather their feedback.

## **Recommendations for Future Practice**

These strategies have the potential to inform professional development opportunities and resources for in-service teachers, pre-service teachers, teacher educators, and state staff. Specifically, topics focused on the POA, resources acquisition, advantages of including community stakeholders and the values of reflection. Workshops and leadership training should also be provided for FFA members to give students the opportunity to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to take an active role in their chapter's participation in the NCA Program. Administrators should also have access to information and resources to support the FFA chapter and SBAE teacher in the implementation of the Program of Activities and gathering community support. Garnering more support could have a positive impact on advisors that feel additional stress related to facilitating the application process.

Panelists reported peer-to-peer interaction as the preferred source of information related to the NCA process, therefore, in terms of practice the researcher recommends resources be shared in a teacher-facilitated professional development. Additionally, these opportunities should take place at the local level when possible. The inclusion of preservice teachers, teacher educators and state staff members in professional development offerings could address the awareness gap related to resources reported by the expert panelists. This recommendation is consistent with research stating that alternatively certified teachers can benefit from mentoring and interaction with peers in the agricultural education community (Bowling & Ball, 2018).

Additional recommendations for practice include a focus on the messaging National FFA and FFA state associations use to promote the NCA program. For example,

the National Chapter Awards Recognition Guide, social media, and National Convention highlights should showcase the work of a diverse group of teachers and their chapters. Only one panelist indicated they learned about the program from the National FFA website while none of the panelists used state association websites or social media. This could mean that resources should be easier to access online, and information should be provided by state staff to highlight the resources available online.

A review of literature identified two different quality standards for FFA chapters to follow i.e., Divisions and Quality Standards and National Quality Chapter Standards (NQCS). The redundant use of “Quality Standards” causes confusion for those new to the program. A clearer description of the difference and use of these standards is needed in National FFA publications i.e., Official FFA Manual, FFA-National Chapter website, NCA Rubrics, Award Handbooks. The National Chapter Award Handbook should also be advertised and easier to access for state associations and local FFA chapters who should then use the available resources.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

The modified Delphi approach identified constructs for the development of a quantitative instrument featuring the themes identified by the expert panel. Findings from this study are informative to the researcher and stakeholders vested in the NCA program. Additional qualitative and quantitative evidence is needed to validate and potentially generalize to the larger school-based agricultural teacher, FFA advisor population. Potential quantitative studies could focus on chapters that do not actively participate in the award program. Studies focused on the advisor and student pre-reflection and reflection

could inform teacher educators and state staff responsible for professional development.

Qualitative studies i.e., case studies or focus groups featuring teachers in states that had no chapters meeting the criteria for this study (ranking a three-star at the national level at least twice in the last five years) could provide transferrable information for states having low or limited participation in the award program.

Finally, the researcher recommends further inquiry of teacher's attitudes and perceptions of the award program in general. Perceptions of students, administrators, and community stakeholders would also be valuable. Data of this nature could prove useful to program planners at the National FFA Organization and other stakeholders charged with preparation and facilitation of School-Based Agricultural Education Programs.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A

#### Institutional Review Board Approval Form



## Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board

Date: 01/20/2022  
Application Number: IRB-22-21  
Proposal Title: Identifying Effective Strategies for Participating in the National Chapter Award Program: A Delphi Study

Principal Investigator: Emily Manuel  
Co-Investigator(s):  
Faculty Adviser: Jon Ramsey  
Project Coordinator:  
Research Assistant(s):

Processed as: Exempt  
Exempt Category:

### Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

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The IRB application referenced above has been approved. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in 45CFR46.

**This study meets criteria in the Revised Common Rule, as well as, one or more of the circumstances for which continuing review is not required. As Principal Investigator of this research, you will be required to submit a status report to the IRB triennially.**

The final versions of any recruitment, consent and assent documents bearing the IRB approval stamp are available for download from IRBManager. These are the versions that must be used during the study.

As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:

1. Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol must be approved by the IRB. Protocol modifications requiring approval may include changes to the title, PI, adviser, other research personnel, funding status or sponsor, subject population composition or size, recruitment, inclusion/exclusion criteria, research site, research procedures and consent/assent process or forms.
2. Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period. This continuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
3. Report any unanticipated and/or adverse events to the IRB Office promptly.
4. Notify the IRB office when your research project is complete or when you are no longer affiliated with Oklahoma State University.

Please note that approved protocols are subject to monitoring by the IRB and that the IRB office has the authority to inspect research records associated with this protocol at any time. If you have questions about the IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact the IRB Office at 405-744-3377 or [irb@okstate.edu](mailto:irb@okstate.edu).

Sincerely,  
Oklahoma State University IRB

## Appendix B

### Informed Consent SBAE Teacher Panel

Identifying Effective Strategies for Participating in the National Chapter Award Program: A Delphi Study (Informed Consent)

You are invited to participate in a research study looking into the strategies used by successful agricultural education programs to participate and compete in the National Chapter Award Program. The end goal of this study is to identify strategies implemented by FFA chapters to attain a 3-star ranking in the National Chapter Award Program. This can lead to the potential development of new resources for FFA chapters and in-service opportunities for teachers. The study is being conducted by Emily Manuel, a graduate student at Oklahoma State University, in preparation for a thesis defense.

Participation in this study is voluntary. If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to answer a series of questions through use of the Qualtrics survey system. All answers will be confidential and all names/identifiable information will be removed prior to the presentation of the findings. The study will consist of three rounds of questioning at different points between January and March. Each round of questions will take approx. 10-30 minutes to answer. You may skip any questions you do not wish to answer and may refuse to continue in the study at any time.

The research team works to ensure complete confidentiality with all participants. It is possible, however unlikely, that unauthorized individuals could gain access to your responses because of the online survey format. However, your participation in this survey involves risks similar to a person's everyday internet usage. If you have concerns, please consult the Qualtrics privacy policy here. Participation in this study may not benefit you directly, however, the goal of this research is to be able to identify strategies for FFA chapters effectively participate in the National Chapter Award Program. This data will be used to aid in the development of potential in-service, curriculum, and FFA resources based on the findings.

Your time and answers to the questions are of great value to the research individual(s). If you wish to participate in this study, please follow the link to the Qualtrics survey. If you do not wish to participate in this study, you may exit out of this, or, click "no" on the first question of the survey to take you directly to the end without answering any other questions.

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the protection of human research participants at Oklahoma State University has reviewed and approved this study. If you have questions about the study, please contact Emily Manuel or Dr. Jon Ramsey at the information below. If you have questions about the IRB process or concerns regarding the safety of the study, please contact the IRB at (405)-744-3377 or [irb@okstate.edu](mailto:irb@okstate.edu). All reports and correspondence will be kept confidential.

Emily Manuel: [emily.manuel@okstate.edu](mailto:emily.manuel@okstate.edu) or 337-526-8234  
Dr. Jon Ramsey: [jon.ramsey@okstate.edu](mailto:jon.ramsey@okstate.edu) or (405)-744-8036

Do you consent to participating in this survey?



Approved: 01/20/2022  
Protocol #: IRB-22-21

## Appendix C

### Electronic Recruitment Message

Subject Line: National Chapter Award Research Opportunity-Master's Thesis

Body:

Hello!

My name is Emily Manuel, and I am a current graduate student at Oklahoma State University in the Department of Agricultural Education, Communications & Leadership. Before coming to OSU, I was a high school agriscience teacher in my home state of Louisiana for five years. As an FFA advisor, I enjoyed supervising my students as they grew throughout the course of the year by planning and implementing an active FFA Program of Activities. Competing in the National Chapter Award Program was where the students' hard work paid off and I gained a passion for the program when I saw how it motivated FFA members to be better leaders. I have volunteered as a judge for NCA summer judging for the last 3 years and have served on the National Chapter Award committee. My passion for the NCA program and its impact on FFA members has led me to my thesis topic.

I am asking for your participation in a research study looking into strategies used by successful agricultural education programs to participate and compete in the National Chapter Award Program. The purpose of this study is to identify strategies implemented by FFA chapters to attain a 3-star ranking in the National Chapter Award Program. This can lead to the potential development of new resources for FFA chapters and in-service opportunities for teachers.

Your chapter has been identified as having experience with the National FFA National Chapter Award Program and I would appreciate your participation. If this email reaches a multi-teacher program, please identify the teacher who has the most experience with the National Chapter Award Program. This teacher will be the individual representing the chapter in this study. Other teachers can contribute, however, only one teacher should reply to each round of the study. If you wish to participate in this study, please respond by clicking [here](#) by next Wednesday (2/16). If you do not wish to participate in this study, you may delete this email, or, follow the link and click "no" to not participate in the study. If you have any questions about the study, please contact my advisor, Dr. Jon Ramsey, or me at the information below.

Emily Manuel: [emily.manuel@okstate.edu](mailto:emily.manuel@okstate.edu) or (337) 526-8234

Dr. Jon Ramsey: [jon.ramsey@okstate.edu](mailto:jon.ramsey@okstate.edu) or (405) 744-8036

Thank you,

Emily Manuel

Graduate Student

Agricultural Education

Oklahoma State University

458 Agricultural Hall | Stillwater, OK 74078

## Appendix D

Follow-up Reminder, Electronic Recruitment Message



Subject Line: Reminder- National Chapter Award Thesis Research

Body:

Good morning,

I wanted to send a reminder about my National Chapter Award Program Thesis Research. You have been identified as an ag teacher who excels in this program, and I would appreciate your participation in my study. Please see the previous email below for details and respond [here](#) by Monday 2/21 if you are willing to participate.

Thank you,  
Emily Manuel

## Appendix E

### Round One Electronic Participation Message

Subject Line: National Chapter Thesis Round 1

Body:

Dear potential Thesis research participant:

Thank you for responding to my request for participation in a research study looking into the strategies used by successful agricultural education programs to participate and compete in the National Chapter Award Program. The end goal of this study is to identify strategies implemented by FFA chapters to attain a 3-star ranking in the National Chapter Award Program. This can lead to the potential development of new resources for FFA chapters and in-service opportunities for teachers.

Participation in this study is voluntary. If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to answer a series of questions through use of the Qualtrics survey system. All answers will be confidential and all names/identifiable information will be removed prior to the presentation of the findings. The study will consist of three rounds of questioning at different points between February and March. Each round of questions will take approx. 10-30 minutes to answer. You may skip any questions you do not wish to answer and may refuse to continue in the study at any time.

Your time and answers to the questions are of great value to the research individual(s). If you wish to participate in this study, please follow this [link](#) to the Qualtrics survey. If you do not wish to participate in this study, you may exit out of this, or, click “no” on the first question of the survey to take you directly to the end without answering any other questions.

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the protection of human research participants at Oklahoma State University has reviewed and approved this study. If you have questions about the study, please contact Emily Manuel or Dr. Jon Ramsey at the information below. If you have questions about the IRB process or concerns regarding the safety of the study, please contact the IRB at (405)-744-3377 or [irb@okstate.edu](mailto:irb@okstate.edu). All reports and correspondence will be kept confidential.

Emily Manuel: [emily.manuel@okstate.edu](mailto:emily.manuel@okstate.edu) or 337-526-8234  
Dr. Jon Ramsey: [jon.ramsey@okstate.edu](mailto:jon.ramsey@okstate.edu) or (405)-744-8036

[https://okstatecasnr.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_6nDiHIVzf7oO7no](https://okstatecasnr.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6nDiHIVzf7oO7no)

Thanks!  
Emily Manuel  
Graduate Student  
Agricultural Education  
Oklahoma State University  
458 Agricultural Hall | Stillwater, OK 74078

## Appendix F

### Round One Electronic Participation Reminder Message

Subject Line: National Chapter Thesis Round 1 Reminder

Body:

Dear potential Thesis research participant:

Thank you to those who have already completed the survey that was sent to you last week. If you have not responded, please do so by Monday 3/7. As a reminder this is a research study looking into the strategies used by successful agricultural education programs to participate and compete in the National Chapter Award Program. The end goal of this study is to identify strategies implemented by FFA chapters to attain a 3-star ranking in the National Chapter Award Program. The last open-ended question on the survey is vital to the study so please ensure that you answer this question if at all possible.

All answers will be confidential and all names/identifiable information will be removed prior to the presentation of the findings. This first round of questions will take approx. 15 minutes to answer. Your time and answers to the questions are of great value to the research individual(s). If you wish to participate in this study, please follow this [link](#) to the Qualtrics survey. If you do not wish to participate in this study, you may exit out of this, or, click “no” on the first question of the survey to take you directly to the end without answering any other questions.

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the protection of human research participants at Oklahoma State University has reviewed and approved this study. If you have questions about the study, please contact Emily Manuel or Dr. Jon Ramsey at the information below. If you have questions about the IRB process or concerns regarding the safety of the study, please contact the IRB at (405)-744-3377 or [irb@okstate.edu](mailto:irb@okstate.edu). All reports and correspondence will be kept confidential.

Emily Manuel: [emily.manuel@okstate.edu](mailto:emily.manuel@okstate.edu) or (337)-526-8234  
Dr. Jon Ramsey: [jon.ramsey@okstate.edu](mailto:jon.ramsey@okstate.edu) or (405)-744-8036

[https://okstatecasnr.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_6nDiHIVzf7oO7no](https://okstatecasnr.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6nDiHIVzf7oO7no)

Thank you,  
Emily Manuel  
Graduate Student  
Agricultural Education  
Oklahoma State University  
458 Agricultural Hall | Stillwater, OK 74078

## Appendix G

### Round One Questionnaire

## Identifying Effective Strategies for Participating in the National Chapter Award Program: A Delphi Study

Q1 You are invited to participate in a research study looking into the strategies used by successful agricultural education programs to participate and compete in the National Chapter Award Program. The end goal of this study is to identify strategies implemented by FFA chapters to attain a 3-star ranking in the National Chapter Award Program. This can lead to the potential development of new resources for FFA chapters and in-service opportunities for teachers. The study is being conducted by Emily Manuel, a graduate student at Oklahoma State University, in preparation for a thesis defense.

Participation in this study is voluntary. If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to answer a series of questions through use of the Qualtrics survey system. All answers will be confidential and all names/identifiable information will be removed prior to the presentation of the findings. The study will consist of three rounds of questioning at different points between February and March. Each round of questions will take approx. 10-30 minutes to answer. You may skip any questions you do not wish to answer and may refuse to continue in the study at any time.

The research team works to ensure complete confidentiality with all participants. It is possible, however unlikely, that unauthorized individuals could gain access to your responses because of the online survey format. However, your participation in this survey involves risks similar to a person's everyday internet usage. If you have concerns, please consult the Qualtrics privacy policy [here](#). Participation in this study may not benefit you directly, however, the goal of this research is to be able to identify strategies for FFA chapters to effectively participate in the National Chapter Award Program. This data will be used to aid in the development of potential in-service, curriculum, and FFA resources based on the findings.

Your time and answers to the questions are of great value to the research individual(s). If you wish to participate in this study, please follow the link to the Qualtrics survey. If you do not wish to participate in this study, you may exit out of this, or, click "no" on the first question of the survey to take you directly to the end without answering any other questions.

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the protection of human research participants at Oklahoma State University has reviewed and approved this study. If you have questions about the study, please contact Emily Manuel or Dr. Jon Ramsey at the information below. If you have questions about the IRB process or concerns regarding the safety of the study, please contact the IRB at (405)-744-3377 or [irb@okstate.edu](mailto:irb@okstate.edu). All reports and correspondence will be kept confidential.

Emily Manuel: [emily.manuel@okstate.edu](mailto:emily.manuel@okstate.edu) or (337)-526-8234  
Dr. Jon Ramsey: [jon.ramsey@okstate.edu](mailto:jon.ramsey@okstate.edu) or (405)-744-8036

Do you consent to participating in this survey?

Yes

No



Q2 Name

---

Q3 Email

---

Q4 Gender

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to answer

Q5 Please identify your teacher certification pathway.

- Traditionally certified
- Alternatively certified
- Emergency certified

Q6 Select the state where you currently serve as an agricultural education teacher.

- Arkansas
- Colorado
- Kansas
- Louisiana
- New Mexico
- Oklahoma
- Texas

Q7 How many years have you been an Agricultural Education instructor?

0 5 10 15 20 25 30 35 40 45 50

(Including this year)



Q8 How many agricultural education instructors are there in your department?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10 or more

Q9 How many years have you competed at the National level in the National Chapter Award program as an FFA advisor?

0 5 10 15 20 25 30 35 40 45 50

(Including this year)



Q10 How many years have you advised a chapter that received a 3-star ranking at the National level?

0 5 10 15 20 25 30 35 40 45 50

(Including this year)



Q11 Which National Chapter Award Program honors have an FFA chapter you advised received?

- Model of Excellence Finalist
- Model of Excellence Overall Winner
- Middle School Model of Excellence Finalist
- Middle School Model of Excellence Overall Winner
- Premier Chapter Finalist- Growing Leaders
- Top Premier Chapter- Growing Leaders
- Premier Chapter Finalist- Building Communities
- Top Premier Chapter- Building Communities
- Premier Chapter Finalist- Strengthening Agriculture
- Top Premier Chapter- Strengthening Agriculture
- None of the above

Q12 What support does your state offer for preparing the National Chapter Award application?

- State Staff gives individualized feedback
- A committee of teachers gives feedback
- Professional development workshops are provided by state staff
- Professional development is offered by other teachers
- Online resources are provided
- None

Q13 How did you learn about the National Chapter Award Program?

- National FFA Staff
- National FFA website
- National Convention
- State Staff
- State Association website
- State Convention
- Coteacher
- Other teachers outside of your program
- College coursework
- Professional development workshop
- Social media

Q14

This study is seeking to identify strategies FFA chapters utilize to earn a three-star ranking on the National Chapter Award Application. There are no right or wrong answers. Please provide as many strategies and as much detail as you like. Strategies can be listed in a bullet format i.e., Smart Goals; or described in more detail i.e., "Teaching students to set SMART goals at the beginning of the school year".

What strategies does your FFA chapter implement to achieve a 3-star ranking in the National Chapter Award Program?

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## Appendix H

### Round Two Electronic Participation Message

Subject Line: NCA Thesis Research Round Two

Body:

Thank you for your participation in round one of the study identifying the strategies implemented by FFA chapters to achieve a 3-star ranking in the National Chapter Award Program. This second round questionnaire will ask you to rate your level of agreement on answers generated in round one.

Your participation in this study will lead to the development of professional development and resources to assist FFA chapters in participating in the National Chapter Award Program. Thank you for considering my request. If you choose to participate in this study please click on the [link](#) provided and follow the instructions for the questionnaire. If you choose not to participate in the study, thank you for your time and your support of agricultural education.

[https://okstatecasnr.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_dhCmNw2XkFq5b0y](https://okstatecasnr.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_dhCmNw2XkFq5b0y)

Thank you,  
Emily Manuel  
Graduate Student  
Agricultural Education  
Oklahoma State University  
458 Agricultural Hall | Stillwater, OK 74078

## Appendix I

### Round Two Electronic Participation Reminder Message



Subject Line: Round Two of NCA Study

Body:

Good afternoon!

I am following up to see that you received my round two questionnaire for my thesis research on the National Chapter Award program. I greatly appreciate your participation so far and would be so thankful if you would continue with the study by responding to the round two survey. This round is simply statements with an agreement scale to select from, rather than open ended questions so it should take less than five minutes. If you would like to continue participating in the study, you may do so at this link [https://okstatecasnr.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_dhCmNw2XkFq5b0y](https://okstatecasnr.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_dhCmNw2XkFq5b0y). If not, I appreciate your feedback so far and hope that you have a great rest of your school year.

Thanks again,  
Emily Manuel  
Graduate Student  
Agricultural Education  
Oklahoma State University  
458 Agricultural Hall | Stillwater, OK 74078

## Appendix J

### Round Two Questionnaire

## Thesis Round 2

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Q1 In round one, panelists were asked to identify strategies FFA chapters implement to achieve a three-star ranking on the National Chapter Award Application. The researcher identified four themes: Planning & Resources, Implementing Activities, Application Writing, and Reflecting from the responses provided from the round one questionnaire. Below is a list of items identified as a result of round one in no particular order. Round two seeks to identify consensus of the items resulting from round one. To establish consensus, panelists are asked to identify their level of agreement using the summated scale found below.

Please rate each item from 1 to 6 using the following summated scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Somewhat Disagree, 4 = Somewhat Agree, 5 = Agree, 6 = Strongly Agree. Space is provided at the end of each section to share additional strategies you believe may have been overlooked in Round One.

Thank you for participating in this research.

Please enter your email address below.

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Q2 The theme, **Planning and Resources** was determined from the following statements. Please rate your level of agreement for each statement as it relates to **Planning and Resource** strategies to complete the National Chapter Award Application.

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat Disagree (3)	Somewhat Agree (4)	Agree (5)	Strongly Agree (6)
Develop a systematic schedule	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop a year-long plan for activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Schedule major activities across the school year	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Host an officer retreat to generate activity ideas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Set up working committees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Establish SMART goals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop action plans	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Utilize a Program of Activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Utilize Model of Innovation/Excellence winners as examples	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Identify locally relevant activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Utilize FFA activity planning sheets	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Utilize AET Resources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Utilize FFA NCA Rubrics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Identify deadlines	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Plan one activity per standard	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Utilize the 15 quality standards as guides for activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Utilize alumni volunteers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Identify activities that provide a service to students, school and community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volunteer to judge applications at the state level	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Think big	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Use national chapter application as template for the chapter POA	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Q3 Please provide any additional strategies related to **planning and resources** that could be used to complete the National Chapter Award Application.

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Q4

The theme, **Implementing Activities** was determined from the following statements. Please rate your level of agreement for each statement as it relates to implementing activities related to the National Chapter Award Application.

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat Disagree (3)	Somewhat Agree (4)	Agree (5)	Strongly Agree (6)
Committee accountability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Officer investment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Persistence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Be open to opportunities that arise throughout the year	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student ownership	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Consider student impact	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Weekly officer meetings focused on NCA progress	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Take/capture photographs (action shots)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Committee chair develops a draft report of the activity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teacher reviews and reflects on draft report	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Involvement as many students as possible

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Q5 Please provide any additional strategies related to **implementing activities** to complete the National Chapter Award Application.

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Q6

The theme, **Application Writing** was determined from the following statements. Please rate your level of agreement for each statement as it relates to writing the National Chapter Award Application.

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat Disagree (3)	Somewhat Agree (4)	Agree (5)	Strongly Agree (6)
Utilize divisions and quality standards	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Follow the NCA Rubric	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Write/develop application throughout the year	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Write action plans	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Select quality pictures	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Integrate proper grammar	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Incorporate state level judging feedback	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reinforce writing skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Select a uniform writing format	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Assign student teams to complete portions of the application	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Officers  
complete the  
application

Completed  
application  
reviewed by  
multiple  
SBAE  
teachers

Completed  
application  
reviewed by  
English  
teacher

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Q7 Please provide any additional strategies related to **application writing**.

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Q8

The theme, **Reflecting** was determined from the following statements. Please rate your level of agreement for each statement as it relates to reflecting on the National Chapter Award Application.

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat Disagree (3)	Somewhat Agree (4)	Agree (5)	Strongly Agree (6)
Review the National Chapter Awards Recognition Guide	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gather stakeholder feedback	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Assess program needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Guide student reflection	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Perform teacher reflection	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Q9 Please provide any additional strategies related to **reflecting** on the National Chapter Award Application process.

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## Appendix K

### Round Three Electronic Participation Message

Subject Line: NCA Research Final Round

Body:

Good afternoon,

Thank you for your participation in the first two rounds of my study concerning the strategies used to implement the National Chapter Award. This third and final questionnaire focuses on developing consensus by asking you to rate your level of agreement on items for which at least 51% but less than 75% of panelists selected agree or strongly agree in round 2. This study includes 13 statements for you to rate that should only take a minute of your time. If you choose to participate in this study, please click on the link provided and follow the instructions for the questionnaire. If you choose not to participate in the study, thank you for your time. I value your feedback so far and appreciate your help with this research. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at [emily.manuel@okstate.edu](mailto:emily.manuel@okstate.edu), or my advisor, Dr. Jon Ramsey, at [jon.ramsey@okstate.edu](mailto:jon.ramsey@okstate.edu).

[https://okstatecasnr.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_6FObg9dff78edTM](https://okstatecasnr.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6FObg9dff78edTM)

Thank you,  
Emily Manuel  
Graduate Student  
Agricultural Education  
Oklahoma State University  
458 Agricultural Hall | Stillwater, OK 74078

## Appendix L

### Round Three Electronic Participation Reminder Message

Subject Line: NCA Research Final Round Follow Up

Body:

Good morning,

I am still looking for a few more responses to my final round questionnaire by the end of the day tomorrow 5/6. It will take less than 3 minutes to complete. If you would still like to participate you may do so at this link-

[https://okstatecasnr.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_6FObg9dff78edTM](https://okstatecasnr.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6FObg9dff78edTM). Your feedback is greatly appreciated.

Thank you,  
Emily Manuel

Appendix M

Round Three Questionnaire

# Thesis Round 3

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Q1 The third and final round of the modified Delphi focuses on refining consensus. Please rate your level of agreement on the following items. These items are from round two and reached a level of agreement reflecting at least 51% but less than 75%. Therefore they are presented here for another review by the panel.

Please rate each item from 1 to 6 using the following summated scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Somewhat Disagree, 4 = Somewhat Agree, 5 = Agree, 6 = Strongly Agree.

Thank you for participating in my thesis research. If you have questions regarding this study please email me, Emily Manuel, at [emily.manuel@okstate.edu](mailto:emily.manuel@okstate.edu).

Please enter your email address below to continue participating in this study.

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Q2 The theme, **Planning and Resources** was determined from the following statements. Please rate your level of agreement for each statement as it relates to **Planning and Resource** strategies to complete the National Chapter Award Application.

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat Disagree (3)	Somewhat Agree (4)	Agree (5)	Strongly Agree (6)
Set up working committees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Plan one activity per standard	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Utilize alumni volunteers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Q3

The theme, **Implementing Activities** was determined from the following statements. Please rate your level of agreement for each statement as it relates to implementing activities related to the National Chapter Award Application.

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat Disagree (3)	Somewhat Agree (4)	Agree (5)	Strongly Agree (6)
Teacher reviews and reflects on draft report	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Involve as many students as possible	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q4

The theme, **Application Writing** was determined from the following statements. Please rate your level of agreement for each statement as it relates to writing the National Chapter Award Application.

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat Disagree (3)	Somewhat Agree (4)	Agree (5)	Strongly Agree (6)
Write action plans	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Officers complete the application	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Completed application reviewed by multiple SBAE teachers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Completed application reviewed by English teacher	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q5

The theme, **Reflecting** was determined from the following statements. Please rate your level of agreement for each statement as it relates to reflecting on the National Chapter Award Application.

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat Disagree (3)	Somewhat Agree (4)	Agree (5)	Strongly Agree (6)
Review the National Chapter Awards Recognition Guide	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Guide student reflection	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Perform teacher reflection	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## VITA

Emily Oreta Manuel

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: IDENTIFYING EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE NATIONAL CHAPTER AWARD PROGRAM: A DELPHI STUDY

Major Field: Agricultural Education and Leadership

Biographical:

Born in Lake Charles, LA on May 5, 1993, daughter of Darrin and Wendy T. Manuel

Education:

Completed the requirements for the Master of Science in Agricultural Education and Leadership at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in 2022.

Completed the requirements for the Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Education at Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana in 2015.

Experience:

Agricultural Education Instructor/FFA Advisor, St. Amant, LA, 2015-2017  
Agricultural Education Instructor/FFA Advisor, Crowley, LA, 2017-2020

Professional Memberships:

American Association for Agricultural Education (AAAE)  
National Association of Agricultural Educators (NAAE)