

**FOLLOW-UP STUDY OF GRADUATES'
PERCEPTIONS OF THE OKLAHOMA
AGRICULTURAL LEADERSHIP
PROGRAM**

By

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Oklahoma agriculture is in a constant state of change, bringing with it many concerns about the future of the agriculture industry. Issues such as diversity in agricultural production, increasing international trade, and increasing environmental legislation and regulations are creating an environment in which agriculturists must be informed and equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills in order for them to be able to assume leadership responsibilities to address the many challenges that face agriculture. The Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program (OALP) was developed to help Oklahoma agriculturists learn the skills needed to deal with challenging agricultural issues and concerns. In 1980, planning for the program began with an assembly of representatives of several agricultural groups in the state and recognized agricultural leaders and administrators from the Division of Agriculture at Oklahoma State University. An OALP leadership advisory council was formed. The Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program was developed for young adults actively involved in the areas of farming, ranching, or agribusiness. The program was designed to provide these young adults with training and experience necessary to help them assume leadership roles and positions in their community and state. Their involvement plays

an important part in the future of agriculture in Oklahoma and the future of Oklahoma agriculture in the total economy (Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership State Advisory Council & Division of Agriculture OSU, 1985).

Statement of the Problem

Beginning with its first class in 1982, the Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program has graduated 174 individuals comprising six classes. At the end of each seminar, and at the conclusion of each class, participants are asked to complete an evaluation to provide feedback to the seminar coordinators and presenters, the board of directors, and the executive director. However, the success of the program in meeting its objectives, and in meeting the needs of the participants and the changing agricultural industry has yet to be formally evaluated. The lack of this information raises questions in the minds of program stakeholders regarding the success of the program. Is the Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program keeping up-to-date with the changing agricultural industry and addressing current and future issues confronting agriculture? Is the Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program accomplishing what it was designed to do? How did this program affect the participants?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to conduct a follow up of graduates of the Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program to gather their perceptions about the program.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were the following:

1. To update and describe the demographic characteristics of the Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program (OALP) participants.
2. To describe the participants' perceptions of the appropriateness of the objectives of the OALP and the extent of accomplishment of each.
3. To describe the participants' perceptions of the extent of participation and leadership involvement in organizations and activities since participation in the OALP.
4. To describe the participants' perceptions of the impact of the OALP on selected leadership skills.
5. To identify areas of suggested program improvement(s) based on responses of participants.

Rationale for the Study

Educational evaluation is the process of making judgments about the worth of educational programs, materials, and techniques (Borg & Gall, 1983). Evaluations have come to be viewed by administrators as a necessary tool in policy analysis, in the decision making process, and in program management. According to Borg and Gall, evaluations are conducted in order to generate data that will help directors and program managers make sound decisions concerning program design, personnel, and content. An evaluation is effective to the extent that it offers ideas pertinent to pending actions and more effective decisions are made as a result. To speak broadly, an evaluation ought to inform and improve the operations of the system (Cronbach, 1981). This study was developed to evaluate the present Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program and to promote a basis for recommendations for future programming.

Significance of the Study

By conducting the follow up of graduates and obtaining their perceptions of the impact of participation in the program, an information base can be formed to be used by the coordinators of the OALP to analyze the effectiveness of the program. Insight may be provided to determine whether participants benefit from the program. Feedback may be provided to coordinators of the program that could prove to be valuable in the process of

decision making regarding future programming in the OALP thereby increasing the effectiveness of the program.

Research Questions

Based on the objectives of the study, the following research questions were developed:

1. How appropriate do the participants perceive the objectives set forth by the Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program?
2. To what extent have the objectives of the OALP been reached by the participants.
3. Do the program participants become involved in organizations and activities in a leadership capacity after graduating from the OALP?
4. To what extent do participants perceive that their leadership skills have improved since participation in the OALP?
5. What suggestions do participants have that will make future classes of the OALP more beneficial and successful?

Assumptions

For the purpose of this study the following assumptions were made:

1. The responses, opinions, and perceptions obtained from the questionnaire were answered honestly and conscientiously by the OALP graduates.
2. The OALP graduates surveyed would be able to recall accurately their situation in life prior to participation in the OALP and since participation occurred.
3. The responses to perception statements would serve as indicators of the impact of the Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program on participants.

Limitations

The following limitations were recognized by the researcher:

1. The entire population of OALP graduates was intended to be surveyed for this study. However, three individuals were excluded from the study: one participant was deceased, and two other participants could not be located.
2. The results of the study are entirely dependent upon the responses of OALP graduates.
3. Class VI graduated in the Spring of 1994 at about the same time the study was being conducted. This limits the involvement in organizations and leadership activities since participation in the OALP and therefore limits the use of Class VI respondents' data.

4. The results can only be generalized to the OALP participants.

Definition of Terms

For the purposes of this study, the following terms were defined accordingly:

Community participation: A self-reported measure of post-OALP involvement in organizations and activities at the local community, state and/or national level.

Community leadership: A self-reported measure of post-OALP committee membership and elected office in those same organizations and activities.

Scope

The scope of this study included Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program participants from six classes spanning the years 1982 through 1994. The participants of the OALP were identified by the researcher with the help of the OALP director and executive secretary, and past OALP directories.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present information which was relevant to this investigation. Involved in this review were research studies, books, periodicals, and professional magazines which had pertinent information. For a more meaningful review, the literature has been broken down into the following major headings:

1. Leadership
2. The Need for Leadership Development Programs in Agriculture
3. Establishment of Agricultural Leadership Programs
4. Similarities and Differences in Programs
5. The Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program
6. Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program Components
7. Evaluational Studies of Agricultural Leadership Programs
8. Participation in Community Organizations

Leadership

Leadership has been a topic of widespread interest for many years. Volumes have been written about it -- what it is, how it is determined, who has it, and how to get it. Yet, as captivating as the topic is, leadership in many ways remains an elusive and confusing concept. Alfonso (1977) addressed this when he wrote "It is frequently true that neither the leaders nor the led understand the dynamics of behavior and human interaction which constitutes effective leadership" (p. 4).

Leadership can and has been defined in many ways and by many people. Webster (1979) defines leadership as directing or influencing others. Forker (1985) said leadership is not the quality of trying to get others to follow, but the knowing where one is going so that others want that too. He continued, "People can be divided into three groups - those who make things happen, those who watch things happen and those who wonder what happened. Those who make things happen are considered leaders" (p. 745). Harry Truman defined leadership by saying "A leader is a man who has the ability to get other people to do what they don't want to do and like it" as quoted in Manske (1990, p. 3). Manske gives his definition of leadership by stating that a leader is a "visionary that energizes others" (p. 3). Two key dimensions are important in this definition of leadership. First, the leader creates a vision of the future and second, the leader inspires people to make the vision a reality. Kouzes and Posner (1987) viewed leadership as the relationship of leader to follower. The relationship was built on an ability to understand human behavior, to listen, to understand, and to

respond to human needs. Fiedler (1967) reviewed many descriptions of leadership and listed a number of phrases such as the exercise of authority and responsibility, the making of decisions, the initiation of acts leading to purposeful group solutions, the creation of change, and the direction and coordination of task relevant group activity.

Regardless of the absence of one clear and definitive description of leadership, there is, and always has been, a need for strong, responsive leadership in all organizations. There is especially a great need for agricultural leadership (Parks, 1985).

Academic disciplines including psychology, political and administrative science, and sociology have for years questioned what makes a leader and what constitutes effective leadership. Theories of leadership attempt to explain factors involved in the emergence of leadership of the nature of leadership (Stogdill, 1974). Early theorists attempted to explain leadership on the basis of inheritance or the hereditary background of great men. Woods (1913) studied rulers of 14 nations over a period of ten centuries. The conditions of each reign were found to resemble the ruler's capabilities. It was also thought that the brothers of kings tended to become men of power and influence as a result of natural endowment. Woods concluded that the man makes the nation and shapes it in accordance with his abilities. Wiggam (1931) further developed this notion by postulating that the survival of the fittest and intermarriage among them produces an aristocratic class differing biologically from the lower class. Therefore, an adequate supply of superior leaders depended upon a high birth rate among the upper class.

The “Great Man” theory actually described supposed qualities of superiority that were attributed as the autonomous area of certain elite. They became leaders because of a natural tendency for the cream to rise to the top (Jennings, 1960).

The issue of group-member participation in decision making was first made known by Lewin and Lippitt (1939), and further developed by White and Lippitt (1968). Their research isolated leader behavior and its impact upon the group. Lewin and his colleagues arranged for 10 and 11 year-old boys to meet after school in small groups to work on hobbies such as woodworking and painting. Each of these work groups was led by an adult who assumed one of three particular styles of leadership -- autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire. The autocratic leader made all of the decisions for the group, never asking for input from the boys. The democratic leader set no policies for the group; the group members themselves made all decisions while guided by the leader. The democratic leader frequently explained goals and steps to reach goals, allowing groups members to make their own choices. The laissez-faire leader was, in a sense, not even a leader. He never participated in the group interactions, allowing the boys to work in whichever way they wished.

Two of the most important variables the researchers measured were group productivity and aggressiveness. Both variables were worse with the laissez-faire leader. Productivity was best with the autocratic leader. However, the researchers noted that when the leader left the room for any lengthy period of time, the democratically led groups kept right on working, while the autocratically led groups stopped working. High rates of hostility among members, more demands for attention,

more destructiveness, and a greater tendency to single out one group member to serve as a target for continual verbal abuse was found to occur in the autocratically led groups. Democratic groups tended to be friendlier and more group oriented. Overall, the boys preferred democratic leaders over the other two varieties.

In the 1950's, a study of specific characteristics of leaders seen as effective by subordinates was carried out by researchers at The Ohio State University. This study was the first to identify two sets of variables that became the focus for leadership study during the sixties. The two factors identified were consideration or maintenance behavior, and initiating structure or task-oriented behavior. It was found that subordinates were more satisfied with leaders who scored highly on consideration, indicating friendship, mutual trust, respect and warmth were preferred behaviors. However, there was no consistent relationship between consideration and leader effectiveness or between initiating structure (giving direction to a group) and leader effectiveness (Vroom, 1976).

Like the Ohio State studies, studies conducted at the University of Michigan (Likert, 1967) found that the most effective leaders were those who used group methods of decision making, focused on the human aspects of their subordinates' problems, and who set high performance goals. An important additional finding was that leadership characteristics identified in both studies were related to the type of situation in which leadership was exercised and that it was impossible to identify the characteristics of effective leadership without also considering the particular situation. These studies of the relationships between variables in the leader behavior and the

performance or effectiveness of the group led to the subsequent emphasis on the interaction of a situation with the leader's behavior (Vroom, 1976).

The "contingency model" was an outcome of style and situation research. Fiedler (1967) considered three variables: the group atmosphere or measure of the leader-group relationship; the task structure, or the specificity of goals; and the leader power position, or the authority over group members. The framework for this model assumed that leadership effectiveness depends on, or is contingent upon, both the personal characteristics of the leader and the nature of the group situation. He found that task-oriented leaders performed best in less favorable situational structure, and relationship-oriented leaders functioned best in moderately structured settings. Thus the leader must either adapt to the situation, or the appropriate leader must be matched to the situation (Fiedler, 1967).

Hershey and Blanchard (1977) took the relationship and task divisions and added a "life cycle" or time maturity dimension. The life cycle theory demonstrated that the relationship of task and maintenance functions to the maturity level of the group or follower development. As the level of maturity of the group increased, the leader behavior required less structure and support. Four patterns of potential leader behavior were expressed including: dictating or telling; persuading or selling; facilitating or participating; and involving or delegating. A leader may assume a different pattern of behavior based upon the readiness of subordinates.

House (1971) developed a motivational theory of leadership or a path-goal model of leadership. In it, he identified the leader as the person providing a

motivational function for subordinates. Leaders, by understanding the reasons for individuals' choices, facilitate the attainment of their goals by reducing obstacles and enhancing satisfaction in the path toward the goal. The leader provides guidance and performance incentives. This model is best demonstrated in situations where goals are concrete, structure is clear, and incentives are readily identifiable.

Vroom and Yetton (1973) proposed a decision-process model as another case of situational leadership theory. The emphasis in this model was on the social process in which decisions take place. Leaders using this model are advised to approach the decision process based upon the attributes that define a problem situation. Seven attributes or levels of the decision process are evaluated by a yes/no decision tree that results in a prescribed set of rule to apply to the situation. These attributes consider such factors as amount of information available concerning the problem, level of acceptance with members, amount of structure, shared goals, and amount of conflict likely to occur before a solution is determined.

The Need for Leadership Development Programs in Agriculture

Byler (1982) pointed out that because the agricultural industry has changed so much over the years, there has become a greater need for competent and aggressive agricultural leaders. Coffey (1991) stated that providing leadership in agriculture is one of the most challenging missions facing agriculturists. He further went on to address certain issues affecting leadership in agriculture including:

1. A population with a small percentage of its food dollar keeping its stomachs full perceives itself as having little reason to be aware of state, national and international agricultural issues and policies and their effects on the food supply and consumer pocketbooks.
2. A population in which the vast majority is at least one generation removed from farming and to whom rural life can only generate nostalgic feelings rather than any comprehensive understanding of the issues affecting the agricultural industry.
3. A population in which the vast majority associate agriculture only with farming and comprehend little of the contemporary agricultural industry.
4. A population in which the majority is greatly influenced by newspaper, radio, television, and advocacy groups, and which usually relies on trendy articles and topics to determine their attitudes toward a product or issue.
5. A population which is largely agriculturally illiterate but through the democratic system controls and determines policy regarding agricultural issues.
6. The agricultural industry has, in many cases, been reactive to social concerns and issues directly relating to survival. Sometimes underfinanced compared to opposition groups, responses have been targeted to rural farm and non-farm audiences rather than the majority of the population, the suburban and urban consumers. (p. 15)

Coffey (1991) went on to state that agricultural leaders at all levels must be aware of and comprehend the implications of major issues and opportunities pertinent to all

agricultural professionals. These issues included: “the weakening competitiveness of rural areas; changing populations make-up; the perception of agriculturists as stewards versus scavengers of the environment; the challenge of scientific fact versus emotion; decreasing illiteracy concerning agricultural issues among all populations; persistent rural poverty; animal welfare, food safety, environment and water quality; and land-use and land management issues” (pp. 17-18).

To address these issues adequately, agriculturists must prioritize leadership training beginning with acquainting or reacquainting themselves with a changing agriculture industry. Coffey (1991) felt that after better understanding these changes, leaders will be developed.

For many years, the agriculture industry has invested much time and effort into developing the production skills and practices of its members while leadership skills and development were virtually left unaddressed. Few members of the agriculture industry were encouraged to venture beyond their own farms to try and become effective leaders, policymakers, and spokespeople (Horner, 1984). Some leadership training programs have been in place for those involved in agriculture, beginning with 4-H and FFA and continuing into adult life with the Young Farmers and Ranchers Educational Association (Horner & Blezek, 1989).

Rohs (1988) emphasized the importance of leadership development, which is especially needed in rural communities. Local leaders many times do not have the leadership skills necessary to bring community citizens together to guide and direct change in their towns and cities or to address community concerns and issues. Due to

the urgent need for these skills, numerous leadership development programs were started both at the local community level and the state level to help adults, in general, and adult agriculturists in particular, build their leadership potential.

Hoff-Hisey and Woods (1994) in "A Report on a Leadership Development Survey Commissioned by the Oklahoma Rural Enterprise Team," described the results of a survey conducted to extract information concerning active Oklahoma leadership development programs. The Oklahoma Rural Enterprise Teams' Leadership Committee, made up of individuals from such entities as the State Department of Vocational Technical Education, the Oklahoma Department of Commerce, the Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department, the Oklahoma Association of Electric Cooperatives, the State Rural Development Council, and the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service, was interested in cataloging the various leadership programs which are available for Oklahoma communities. The survey instrument was developed by members of the Leadership Committee and mailed to all known local and state leadership programs utilizing a list previously compiled by the Oklahoma Department of Commerce. The survey required the name of the leadership program, the programs' contact person, an address, and phone number. Respondents were asked to give a brief overview of their program and the target clients.

Questions were also asked to determine each leadership programs' definition of "leadership development." Respondents were also asked to identify topics that they believed should be included in a leadership development training program. Respondents ranked items in order of importance for leadership development. Each

factor fell under one of three major areas of leadership development: Information and awareness, skill building, and actions (Hoff-Hisey & Woods, 1994).

A total of 20 programs were recognized and listed in this report. Included in these programs were 12 community leadership programs, three rural/agriculture leadership programs, two economic development programs through the chamber of commerce, one through extension programming, and two special interest group programs.

Various themes ran through the definitions of leadership development including attainment of goals, working toward a vision, and empowering local residents to shape their community's future. In terms of factors to be included in leadership development training, respondents ranked information/awareness highest followed by skill building and action steps.

Establishment of Agricultural Leadership Programs

Since 1930, the W. K. Kellogg Foundation has supported efforts to develop leadership and leadership programs in rural areas. The first major activity of the Foundation was the Michigan Community Health Project (Heasley, 1987). This project was to help prepare leaders in the three major fields of Foundation interest: health, education, and agriculture. This interest in leadership development has been maintained over the years by the Foundation, with substantial funds being invested in projects devoted to this important and continuing concern (Heasley, 1987).

In 1965, officials of Michigan State University approached the Kellogg Foundation with an innovative leadership project. The project was designed to give young agriculturists an array of broadening and motivating experiences to help make them effective public affairs participants and effective spokespersons for agricultural and rural interests (Heasley, 1987). The Foundation supported the project with a five-year grant for the purpose of organizing and establishing a leadership development program for Michigan farmers (Miller, 1976).

The first program began in 1965 with Michigan State University's College of Agriculture. The program was known as the Kellogg Farmers Study Program (Heasley, 1987). The participants were successful farm businessmen. Operating from 1965 to 1972, the program achieved positive results as indicated by the subsequent activities of program graduates.

Other states soon became interested and requested assistance from the Foundation to establish similar leadership development projects in their states. In the 1970s the Kellogg Foundation made grants to California, Pennsylvania, Montana, and Washington. In the 1980s, the Kellogg Foundation provided grants for thirteen additional projects, operating in 18 states. The Kellogg Foundation provided only start-up funds for the programs but has given more than \$6 million in total to leadership development programs (Heasley, 1987).

Numerous states have responded to the urgency of the need for agricultural leadership development programs. In the United States there are approximately 30

rural and agricultural leadership programs currently operating. Heasley (1987)

described the most noted of these programs and when they were started including:

1965 Michigan Agricultural Leadership Program (MALP)

1971-1979 Montana Kellogg Extension Education Project (KEEP) which lead
to the Montana Agricultural Leadership Program

1972 California Agricultural Leadership (CAL) Program

1978 Washington Agriculture and Forestry Leadership Program

1979 Kellogg New Zealand Rural Leadership Program

1981 Family Community Leadership Program (FCL)

1981 Nebraska Leadership Education/Action Development (LEAD) Program

1982 Hawaii Agricultural Leadership Foundation (HALF) Program

1982 Illinois Agricultural Leadership Foundation Program (IALP)

1982 Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program (OALP)

1983 Alabama Agriculture and Forestry Leadership Development
Programs/Alabama LEADERS Program

1983 Arizona Project CENTRL Program

1983 Colorado Agricultural Leadership Program

1983 Indiana Agricultural Leadership Program

1983 Missouri Agricultural Leadership of Tomorrow (ALOT) Program

1983 New England Regional Leadership (NERL) Program

1984 Arkansas LeadAR Program

1984 Wisconsin Rural Leadership Program

- 1984 Wyoming Leadership Education and Development (LEAD) Program
- 1985 Empire State Food and Agricultural Leadership Institute Program
- 1985 Leadership Idaho Agriculture Program
- 1985 Leadership Education and Development (LEAD) Program of Ohio
- 1985 Ontario Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program
- 1985 Pennsylvania Rural Leadership (RULE) Program
- 1985 Phillip Morris Agricultural Leadership Development Program
- 1985 Virginia Rural Leadership Program
- 1986 Texas Agricultural Lifetime Leadership (TALL)
- 1987 Florida Leadership Program for Agriculture and Natural Resources
- 1987 Kansas Rural & Agricultural Leadership Program
- 1987 Minnesota Rural and Agricultural Leadership Program

Similarities and Differences in Programs

There are many operational differences and variations from the original Michigan model among the programs. Variations include primary and continuing scholarship arrangements, advisory councils or boards of directors with differing responsibilities, lengths of programs, travel seminar schedules, length of seminars, and many others. Despite variations, there are also many similarities in concepts, issues and educational techniques designed to help rural leaders become more capable of resolving public issues. There is also a common intended audience. Participants are to

be rural agricultural, or closely related leaders, aged twenty-five to forty, with the exceptions of participants from Arizona, Montana, New England, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. Most of the programs have a class size of no more than thirty. All of the programs have recruitment materials, a selection criteria and process, curriculum designs, educational materials, a constitution and bylaws, policy statements, and specified program roles and responsibilities (Heasley, 1987). For a compiled look at the various programs' components, see Appendix A.

The Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program

In November of 1980, the W. K. Kellogg Foundation held a meeting in Spokane, Washington to discuss "Leadership Development for Rural America." The Agricultural Leadership Program was explained at this meeting as it was being conducted in the five pilot states. Oklahoma was invited to attend and participate in this meeting and sent delegates representing the Division of Agriculture, Oklahoma State University (OSU), the Oklahoma A & M Board of Regents, and agricultural leaders in the state.

After returning from Washington, these delegates called a group of Oklahoma agricultural leaders together to discuss implementing a similar program in Oklahoma. Those involved in the initial planning and establishment of the Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program included leaders from Oklahoma agricultural commodity groups, representatives from a local bank and newspaper, and special consultants including a

member of the A & M Board of Regents and a former Governor and U.S. Senator from the state of Oklahoma (Background and History of OALP, 1994).

The two-year Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program (OALP) was then developed by the state leadership council and established in 1982 with a grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. The Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Advisory Council, composed of distinguished agricultural leaders, worked in conjunction with the Division of Agriculture at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma. The council had the primary responsibility for approving the general subject matter content of the curriculum and assisted in the long-range development of the program (Background and History of OALP, 1994). The program was designed to provide leadership training and experience to a chosen group of young adults to help them take on leadership roles in the state of Oklahoma (Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership State Advisory Council & Division of Agriculture OSU, 1985).

The overall objective of the OALP was to further the development of future leaders for Oklahoma agriculture. Specific objectives of the Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program were the following:

1. To increase participants' awareness of Oklahoma's agricultural industry in relation to local, state, national and international problems and opportunities.
2. To expand the participants' understanding of U.S. economic, political, cultural and social systems and how they affect agriculture in Oklahoma.

3. To broaden the participants' perspectives on the major issues affecting agriculture and U.S. society.
4. To increase the participants' abilities to analyze and react to the complex problems affecting Oklahoma agriculture and its rural communities.
5. To increase the participants' leadership involvement and activities at the local, state or national level for the benefit of Oklahoma agriculture.
(Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership State Advisory Council & Division of Agriculture, 1985)

Further objectives were later added to include:

6. To help potential leaders develop a deeper understanding of themselves and other people, as well as personal and group study and interaction, improving skills in communication, and developing a commitment to future leadership roles in Oklahoma agriculture.
7. To help potential leaders develop a better understanding of the various systems of economics and government.
8. To help program participants increase and use their own knowledge and skills in order to solve problems and explore opportunities in and for Oklahoma agriculture. (Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Advisory Council, 1992, p. 1)

The director for Class I of the OALP was Dr. Keith Scarce, then a member of the OSU Agricultural Economics staff. Class II was under the direction of Dr. Bill Taggart. In 1985, Dr. Eugene "Pete" Williams became the director. Dr. Williams

guided Classes III, IV, V, and VI. In 1994, Dr. H. Robert Terry, former head of the Department of Agricultural Education at OSU, was appointed OALP director.

Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program Components

Participants

The Oklahoma Agriculture Leadership Program (OALP) was chiefly designed for men and women in the early phase of their leadership careers. In 1982, participant selection guidelines were identified. Those guidelines stated:

The decision has been made internally that all Vocational Agriculture teachers and County Extension Directors will not be able to participate in the program. It would take too much time away from their jobs. All applications will be taken. Only one person per immediate family will be accepted into the program per year. No less than 24 full-time farmers and up to four to six agri-business persons will compose the first class. The selection Committee will screen out the applicants and if the committee has any questions as to selection procedures, they will bring it up before the council. (Background and History of OALP, 1994, p. 4)

Each class has been limited to 30 members with the exception of Class IV. Due to reduced finances and a small number of applications, Class IV was limited to 25 members. In 1984, the criteria for program participants was further defined and

clarified. Participants must range in age from 25 to 40 years old, and must have been residents of Oklahoma for at least five years. Participants must be actively involved in production agriculture and/or a related agribusiness occupation in Oklahoma. Also eligible were individuals involved in production agriculture but employed off-farm on a part-time basis. Approximately 75 percent of the class members were selected from those individual candidates that were production agriculture oriented. Attendance at all seminars and educational activities was required of the participants unless prevented by a serious illness or family medical emergency or death of an immediate family member. Participants were not required to have a college degree, and university credit could not be gained through participation in the program. Applications were reviewed by a panel of OSU faculty members from the Division of Agriculture and selections were made based on the applicants' records and merit. Finalists and their spouses were then interviewed for final selection. Interviews were held on the OSU campus (OAL State Advisory Council & Division of Agriculture, 1985). In 1993, the Advisory Board revised part of the selection criteria to read:

Candidates must be actively engaged in production agriculture or in an agribusiness occupation or profession in Oklahoma. Applicants who are significantly engaged in production agriculture, but are employed part-time off the farm, are eligible. At least two-thirds of the class of 30 will be selected from applicants engaged in production agriculture. Only one member per family, per class, will be eligible. Employees of Oklahoma State University, Cooperative Extension, USDA, Vocational-Technical Education, or related

areas of service will be limited to not more than a total of six in any one class.

(No more than two individuals from any one agency or group will be permitted to participate in any one class). (Background and History of OALP, 1994, p. 13)

Participants throughout the six classes have represented a cross-section of Oklahoma agriculture.

Curriculum

The curriculum for the two-year program included subject matter topics concerning Leadership Development, Communications, Economics and Policy, International Trade, Institutions and Agencies that serve Oklahoma agriculture, Family Strength, Urban Understanding, State and National Government, Water, Energy and other major issues that affect agriculture in Oklahoma. Also included in the curriculum is a national government study seminar. Seminars were held on the Oklahoma State University campus and at other sites around the state. A curriculum committee made up of university-wide faculty advises the OALP Director on curriculum development and seminar program staffing (OAL State Advisory Council & Division of Agriculture, 1985).

Special seminars featured on-site tours and studies of agriculturally related businesses and industries as well as others. This allowed participants to experience procedures and problems that may arise in production, marketing and financing.

The curriculum was not limited to agriculture but also stressed the total economic and social picture. Emphasis was placed on the role agriculture plays in cities, in the nation, and in the world. Both developing and developed nations were studied as part of the overall education process of understanding U.S. relations with the rest of the world. To help in this process, an international study seminar was planned as part of the curriculum. Seminars were held to discuss the customs and cultures of the countries that will be visited to help prepare the participants for the trip and their studies (OAL State Advisory Council & Division of Agriculture, 1985).

Support for the Program

The Kellogg Foundation initially provided a \$10,000 grant for the planning efforts of the program. A \$200,000 grant for the implementation of the Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program was then provided. The Leadership Advisory Council proceeded in its efforts and developed a plan of fund raising activities for the program. Major efforts were placed on planning for the first class to ensure program success. The Council submitted proposals totaling \$100,000 to several Oklahoma foundations. Private organizations, farm organizations, and private individuals were also the recipients of proposals for raising funds.

Participants in Class I were required to pay a \$500 tuition fee, which increased to \$1000 beginning with Class II and could be split into \$500 per year. A major portion of the program costs, however, came from private sources. Individuals,

organized groups, foundations and businesses helped support the leadership program through tax-deductible contributions (OAL State Advisory Council & Division of Agriculture, 1985).

The Noble Foundation funded a \$100,000 grant, payable at \$25,000 per year for four years beginning in 1984 with Class II. From 1988 through 1992, the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture was committed to giving \$50,000 per year. Beginning in 1993, the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture based their donation on their own budget in terms of the amount given but continued to support the OALP. Other significant donors to the program have included: Oklahoma Beef Commission, Farmland Industries, Mobay Chemicals, Oklahoma Wheat Commission, Oklahoma Association of Electric Cooperatives, Oklahoma Farmers Union, Oklahoma Cooperative Council, Farmers Coop Grain Dealers Association-Enid, Oklahoma Wheat Growers Association, Oklahoma Vegetable Growers Association, R.T. Stuart/Stuart Ranch, and Clyde Wheeler, Jr./Clear Creek Ranch (Background and History of OALP, 1994).

Ramming (1994) conducted a telephone survey to determine corporate donors' perceptions of the OALP. Specifically, the researcher studied the satisfaction level of the donors with the OALP, their perceptions of the OALP participant selection criteria and the three major financial activities, how funds were solicited, and if donors were kept adequately informed of OALP activities. The population surveyed consisted of the contact persons listed with the OALP for fourteen corporations that had contributed to the program. All fourteen participants indicated that financial support of the program

was in line with the goals of their organization. Overall, participants agreed with the selection criteria including the percentage of production agriculture versus agriculture-related business class members, and the age requirements. The three day seminars, the Washington D.C. trip and the International tour all received tremendous support from twelve of the respondents. The majority of donors felt that their organization was approached in a positive manner for solicitation of funds. A suggestion was made that more information about OALP activities be provided to the donors to be presented to their boards of directors each year. The majority of those interviewed appeared satisfied that the money their organization had contributed was being put to good use to benefit the participants of the OALP.

Evaluational Studies of Agricultural Leadership Programs

Between 1965 and 1976, over 700 rural leaders participated in one of four statewide public affairs leadership development programs. Educational institutions in California, Michigan, Montana, and Pennsylvania conducted these programs. Educational policy makers were concerned about how these programs affected the participants and the involved institutions. This concern led to and guided an extensive four-state program assessment study in 1976. The study focused on whether the major program goals were attained. The conclusions of the study were based on data relating to changes in program graduates' participation in public affairs-related organizations, on graduates' evaluations of how the program experience affected their lives, and on

project managers' reports about how the program affected the sponsoring institutions (Howell, Weir, & Cook, 1979).

Major findings of this study included increased involvement of many program graduates in related public affairs activities including: new memberships and officerships in government and voluntary public service organizations; increased involvement of many program graduates in public affairs activities that were at least regional in scope, including appointments on regional planning commissions and health councils; increased leadership and problem-solving skills of program graduates; increased involvement in economic associations by program graduates; and increased involvement in expressive organizations such as social and fraternal groups. Educational institutions involved in conducting the leadership programs were found to have expanded their extension programming in public affairs education and leadership development. Female graduates generally increased their involvement in public service organizations to a greater extent than male graduates. Participation priorities in social services and environmental improvement activities of program graduates were affected. Effects on careers included greater competence and increased advancement toward occupational goals of program graduates (Howell, Weir, & Cook, 1979).

Olson (1992) conducted a case study to assess the growth in the transactional and transformational leadership skills of graduates that they attributed to their involvement in the Washington Agriculture and Forestry Education Foundation's (WAFEF) two year program. Transformational leadership was defined as "the capacity to adapt means to ends -- to shape and reshape institutions and structures to achieve

broad human purposes and moral aspirations” (p. 1). Transactional leadership was described as “using exchanges to shape behavior” (p. 1).

Results indicated that participants increased their use of both transformational leadership skills and transactional leadership skills. High correlations were found between several skill variables and transformational leadership including personal goal setting, vision, ethics, team building, self assessment processes, ability to inspire others, trust building, environmental scanning, empowering others, value clarification, and group conflict management. Operational goal setting was found to be highly correlated to transactional leadership.

Open-ended questions were also asked to help understand the achievements graduates attributed to their participation in the program. Participants identified three program factors they felt made the greatest difference in their leadership development with those including the refining of a variety of leadership skills, gaining a greater understanding of issues, and an increased confidence in achieving tasks, public speaking, inner strength, personal ideas, and willingness to take risks. The researcher recognized that the participants felt they made great gains in their leadership abilities as a result of participating in the program. The participants attributed the program with contributing to their personal success and enabling them to contribute more to the organizations they were involved in (Olson, 1992).

Whent and Leising (1992) conducted a twenty-year evaluation of the California Agricultural Leadership Program with the purpose of evaluating the impact of the program on its participants and identifying any suggestions for program changes and

modifications to the curriculum. The researchers found that participants positively rated themselves as significantly changing in the program objectives, their family and peer relationships, and their leadership skills as a result of the program. Participants identified benefits of the program to include such things as: the personal contact and interaction with classmates and increased leadership skills; travel experience; interaction with government and agricultural leaders; and knowledge of other societies, cultures, and groups. Participation in the program increased local community involvement of the graduates and helped them attain state association positions and advancements in their careers.

Suggestions for improvement included increased communication with and between participants, applicants, and alumni and a desire for more information from groups with differing points of view. References were made by the participants as to their personal growth and leadership development, their broadened awareness and knowledge of world, global and agricultural issues, and commitment to act on agriculture's behalf. Participants criticized the lecture style of teaching used in the program and suggested that more discussion and class participation be used. They also suggested a need for more individualized leadership self-assessment, and more reading and writing assignments (Whent & Leising, 1992).

In 1986, an evaluation was conducted of the Leadership Education Action Development (LEAD) program in Nebraska. The study assessed LEAD alumni responses about the program and compiled alumni suggestions of how the program could be improved. The study used a static-group comparison design involving three

groups. Researchers found that when the LEAD alumni group was compared with the other two groups, they tended to be more active and hold offices in a greater variety of agricultural related organizations. They had a broader view of the agriculture industry and tended to be more understanding and tolerant of others not directly involved in agriculture (SRI Research, Inc., 1986).

Horner (1984) and Horner and Blezek (1989) stated that the Nebraska LEAD program seems to enhance agricultural leadership. From the first 30 graduates alone, more than 30 percent already hold gubernatorial appointments on state boards and commissions. Others from the first three classes have been elected to state producer, educational, and professional offices. Still others have been sought out for civic, commodity, and educational leadership roles at local, and even national levels.

Andelt and Dillon, (1993) conducted a later research study of the leadership involvement of LEAD Alumni. These researchers examined the experience of LEAD Fellows, who were by that time LEAD Alumni, ten years after applying for the program, and compared their experience with persons who applied but were not selected for the LEAD program during the same time period (Control Group Applicants). "Fellows" in the LEAD program are selected each year to complete a two-year intensive continuing education program, involving thirteen resident seminars each year, a study/travel seminar in the United States to study national issues the first year, and a three-week study/travel seminar outside the United States to study international issues the second year.

Results indicated that LEAD Alumni were different from the Control Group Applicants in that LEAD Alumni held membership in more state organizations, held a greater number of officer positions (President), devoted more hours per month to organizations in which they belonged, and had a greater increase in officer positions per person from the time of application for the program to the time of the study. The researchers felt that the LEAD Program was successful in reaching objectives that were studied in that participants had become more involved in organizations and in leadership roles, particularly at the state level, and had a greater degree of influence in leadership situations (Andelt & Dillon, 1993).

Martin (1977) and Howell and Wilkinson (1977) conducted a study of the three-year Pennsylvania Leadership Program. Martin (1977) post-tested participants immediately after graduation from the program, while Howell and Wilkinson (1977) post-tested participants two years after graduation. After the initial group began the program, a nonequivalent comparison group was identified and similar information was gathered. Martin (1977) found that all three program groups increased significantly in political participation when compared to the comparison group. Martin also found that the effects of socioeconomic status, age, and gender variables were not related to political participation or membership in public affairs-related organizations and economic associations. Howell and Wilkinson (1977) found that participants had significantly higher participation in public affairs-related and economic organizations than the comparison group. The researchers identified a trend away from participation in nongovernmental, voluntary public service organizations and an increase in

participation in organizations having legislative authority to act on behalf of the community.

Participation in Community Organizations

A workable definition for discussing community leadership and program development was formulated in 1986 by the National Extension Task Force on Community Leadership:

Community leadership is that which involves influence, power, and input into public decision-making over one or more spheres of activity. The spheres of activity may include an organization, an area of interest, an institution, a town, county or a region. Leadership capacity extends beyond the skills necessary to maintain a social service and/or activities organization. The leadership skills include those necessary for public decision-making, policy development, program implementation, and organizational maintenance. (p. 23)

This definition suggested the need for application of skills through involvement in local decision-making and action toward community goals. The necessary leadership skills were able to be acquired through formal and/or informal training and experiences.

Freeman (1968) provided another definition of community leadership as a process in which a relatively small number of individuals in a community behave in such a way that they effect (or effectively prevent) a significant change in the lives of a

relatively large number of people. In terms of community leadership projects, Freeman suggested four types which have been common. Among these projects were those based on the assumptions that:

1. active participation in decision making is leadership.
2. formal authority is leadership.
3. social participation is leadership.
4. reputation as identified by informants is leadership. (pp. 6-7)

Leadership development programs have been considered a means for achieving community and rural development goals (Howell, Weir, & Cook, 1979). Bolton (1991) agreed, and stated that one of the main purposes of community development is to develop local leaders who can influence the impact and direction of changes taking place in rural and urban communities.

A great deal of research has been conducted on the type of persons who participate in voluntary community organizations. Babchuk and Booth (1969) gave a broad description of voluntary associations by stating that “they provide a setting in which to engage in expressive activities, function as vehicles to implement special personal interests, and may provide affectual support for the individual” (p. 31).

Voluntary associations were also described as important agencies that support (or try to change) the normative order, help to distribute power at the grass roots level, function as service organizations, and reinforce important values (Babchuk & Booth, 1969).

Studies have found that membership in voluntary community organizations varies according to certain background characteristics. Fairly consistent relationships

between age, marital status, and home ownership and participation in voluntary associations have been found. It has been found that persons in their mid-thirties to early fifties are much more likely to belong to voluntary associations than either younger or older persons (Babchuk & Booth; 1969; Scott, 1957; Hausknecht, 1962). Married people are more likely to be members of voluntary associations than people who are single, widowed, or divorced (Babchuk & Booth, 1969; Hausknecht, 1962). Homeowners are more likely to be members of voluntary groups than are renters (Scott, 1957; Hyman & Wright, 1958; Hausknecht, 1962).

The relationship between a number of others variables and voluntary association membership has been studied, but the findings were often inconsistent. Especially in the case of male-female differences in participation. Scott (1957), and Babchuk and Booth (1969) found that men are more likely to be members of voluntary associations than women. However, Hausknecht (1962) found no difference in membership by gender.

Studies have also been conducted concerning the relationship between voluntary association membership and community size and length of residence. Babchuk and Booth (1969) found no relationship between affiliation and community size. Hyman and Wright (1958) concluded from their study that there was no relationship between length of time at residence in community and participation. They also concluded that there was no difference in participation level between urban residents and non-farm rural residents. However, they did conclude that urban and rural non-farm residents participate more than rural farm residents.

Even more well documented has been the relationship between socio-economic status and the components thereof and participation. The higher a person's income, education, occupational prestige or ranking on a composite measure of socio-economic status, the more likely it is that the individual will belong to a voluntary organization (Erbe, 1964; Babchuk & Booth, 1969; Hyman & Wright, 1971).

Several researchers have defined social or community participation as the number of affiliations with voluntary organizations (Chapin, 1939; Poole, 1981). Many studies in this field have used the Chapin Social Participation Scale or a variation of the scale to describe organizational involvement such as number of memberships, and frequency of attendance at meetings, and participation in organizations as measured by committee memberships, holding an office, and financial contributions. The Social Participation Scale was first published in 1937 in the form of a score card (Chapin, 1937). The scale consisted of five items including (1) membership, (2) attendance, (3) contributions, (4) membership on committees, and (5) position as an officer. Arbitrary numeric weights were then assigned to this order of scaled items. The sum of the weights was taken as the score for participation in group activity. Chapin (1939) found that the scale measured pure social participation in organized group activities, the concept of social acceptance and the processes of so-called leadership.

Olmsted (1954) used the Chapin Social Participation Scale and included the factors of organizational memberships, attendance, officerships, and financial contributions in his study of organizational leadership and social structure of a Minnesota city of 10,000 population. In studying selected community leaders, he

found that the magnitude of a person's social participation score was associated with the likelihood of his being regarded as a community leader.

Evan (1957) also used the Social Participation Scale and suggested in his research that social acceptance, including committee membership and office held, pertains to a decision-making function of participation. This function is traditionally associated with leadership. Evan pointed out that the scale has two dimensions, participation and decision making (leadership).

Erbe (1964) used a modified form of the Chapin Scale to measure organizational involvement and political activity of a sample of people from three small midwestern towns. For each organization reported, the participant was given one point for membership, and extra points were given as follows: attendance - "always," three points, "most times," two points, "sometimes," one point; level of interest in organization - "great deal," two points, "some," one point; highest office held - "officer or chairman of a committee," two points, "committee member," one point. For maximum involvement in an organization an individual could thus receive eight points. He tested and found to be true that the greater the involvement in organizations the higher the level of political participation and the higher the level of socio-economic status.

Poole (1981) conducted a study of community participation of family dairy farmers in the Northeast, and once again used a modified form of Chapin's Scale to measure social participation. Poole omitted the category of "contributions," leaving the categories of membership, attendance, committee membership and holding an office.

Poole found that the larger the farm size, the less family social participation. He felt that farm expansion and increased mechanization created a more hectic way of life, which gave less time for family social activities and participation in local civic affairs.

Weeks (1989) used a variation of Chapin's Social Participation Scale to measure collegiate and community participation of past scholarship recipients. Recipients of the four-year Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo Scholarship were compared to recipients of Opportunity Awards given through the Financial Aid Office at Texas A & M University. Scales were constructed to measure the number of organizations and programs to which individuals belonged (scope) and their levels of participation (intensity) both at the collegiate and community level. Scales were weighted as follows: membership, one point; attendance, two points; committee membership, three points; and office held, four points. The values were then totaled to produce scores ranging from zero (no participation) to ten (a member attending at least 25 percent of meetings, who served as a committee member and as an officer.) Leadership in collegiate organizations and community organizations was computed by removing "membership" and "attendance" categories. "Committee membership" and "office held" remained to constitute the leadership scales.

Weeks found that Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo (HLS&R) scholarship recipients had significantly higher levels of participation in honor organizations, subject clubs, and total collegiate participation. He also found that HLS&R recipients had significantly higher levels of community participation in professional organizations,

civic clubs, and total community participation. Collegiate and community organizational leadership scores were also higher for the HLS&R recipients.

Studies of community participation and leadership development have also been conducted concerning the cooperative extension service, 4-H and the FFA (Langone, 1992; Bolton, 1991; Ladewig & Thomas, 1987; and Brannon, 1988). Extension has been looked on as a source of knowledge and expertise for rural communities. Due to the challenging and complex issues facing communities today that are outside the traditional areas of agriculture and home economics, the role of Extension had been questioned. Langone (1992) conducted a study of Georgia's Community Leadership Program to show that county Extension programs can serve as a viable resource in helping communities face social and economic change. This study rested on the assumption that the ultimate impact of the Community Leadership Program would be reflected primarily on the ongoing leadership activities of its graduates since the program's inception. The impact assessment included data from 76 counties that had participated in the Community Leadership Program between 1986 and 1991. A questionnaire was developed that asked county directors and agents involved in the program for information about activities such as the formation of an alumni group, formation of ad hoc or ongoing committees to address specific local concerns, graduates who have run for elected office, sponsorship of repeat leadership classes, and involvement in special activities and other areas of impact. The Community Leadership Program was found to have a positive impact in the areas of networking, the role of Extension as a community resource, creating a unified spirit among

community leaders, and increasing levels of involvement and levels of diversity in activities and participation. Langone also found that thirty-six alumni groups had been formed, thirty-seven counties had sponsored second leadership classes, participants in a number of counties had formed task forces or organizations to address specific concerns such as drug abuse, illiteracy, land use planning, and water quality, and more than 100 program graduates had run for political offices and/or serve on state boards of organizations.

In a 1991 study, Bolton examined the effects of a leadership development program conducted by county home economics extension faculty in Florida on participants' organizational involvement and participation in leadership roles in voluntary associations. A pretest/posttest questionnaire was designed and administered to participants of leadership development programs in three Florida counties. An organizational leadership index and an organizational involvement index were used to examine gains made in leadership knowledge, capability, and self-confidence. The outcomes showed that members of voluntary associations gained in terms of their knowledge of leadership skills. Voluntary associations were shown to be an important part of their lives as indicated by the number of memberships in such organizations. Participants also evidenced interest in politics by the types of organizations to which they belonged and in their willingness to talk about political issues.

Follow-up studies of the 4-H and FFA youth organizations have dealt with the community participation and leadership development of their former members. Ladewig and Thomas (1987) surveyed 4-H alumni and compared them to alumni of

other youth organizations in an attempt to evaluate the 4-H program of the Cooperative Extension Service. The 4-H alumni were also compared to adults who had not been involved in any organizations as youths. This alumni impact study attempted to answer such questions as who benefited, by how much, and what difference it made that individuals had been involved in 4-H. Using a variation of Chapin's Social Participation Scale, the researchers determined that 4-H alumni were more active participants in community organizations than were the comparison groups.

Brannon (1988), in his study to determine the impact vocational agriculture programs have had on community leaders, used the community participation scale constructed by Ladewig and Thomas (1987) to determine the leadership of selected persons in authority in rural Oklahoma communities. Scales were constructed to measure the number of organizations and groups to which the community leaders belonged (scope) and their levels of participation (intensity). For each group, respondents were given, respectively, a score of one point if they were a member, two points if they served on a committee, and four points if they served as an officer. These scores were selected to put more emphasis on committee membership and officer involvement (Ladewig & Thomas, 1987). Brannon (1988) found that 44 percent of the community leaders surveyed indicated that they had been enrolled in vocational agriculture, and 56 percent were presently residing in the same community in which they had attended high school. Large proportions of respondents were found to be highly active members of organizations and activities including church groups, Chamber of Commerce, community affairs organizations, agricultural groups, school

organizations, educational groups, and political groups. The researcher also concluded that former vocational agriculture students participated to a greater extent in community activities than did community leaders who had not been enrolled in vocational agriculture.

Summary

As a study of subject and research, leadership is a somewhat abstract concept that has been defined in various ways to include those qualities or skills that set a leader apart from others. The description of theory and research over the past 50 years has demonstrated the interaction of variables such as style, behavior, situational structure, follower maturity, and motivation. Studies indicated that an important variable is the type of situation in which leadership occurs and that effective leadership behavior varies with the situation.

Leadership development is also a complex subject focusing on changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes, aspirations, and behavior. The conditions of rural communities and the challenging issues facing the agricultural industry suggest that the development of local leaders and the programs that support that goal are vital components in the search for solutions and resources to solve complex problems of the future.

The Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program works toward developing well-rounded individuals, skilled in communications, educated in national and world affairs,

and familiar with the changing needs in society. OALP prepares participants to lead the agricultural sector of Oklahoma into the challenges of tomorrow (OAL State Advisory Council & Division of Agriculture, 1985).

The review of literature provides evidence that participation and leadership at the community level can be measured using a system that records the level and intensity of participation. Chapin's Social Participation Scale (1937), or some modified version of such, has been used to determine community participation.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to conduct a follow up of graduates of the Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program to gather their perceptions about the program. The objectives of the study were the following:

1. To update and describe the demographic characteristics of the OALP participants.
2. To describe the participants' perceptions of the appropriateness of the objectives of the OALP and the extent of accomplishment of each.
3. To describe the participants' perceptions of the extent of participation and leadership involvement in organizations and activities since participation in the OALP.
4. To describe the participants' perceptions of the impact of the OALP on selected leadership skills.
5. To identify areas of suggested program improvement(s) based on responses of participants.

Institutional Review Board (IRB)

Federal regulations and Oklahoma State University policy require review and approval of all research studies that involve human subjects before investigators can begin their research. The Oklahoma State University Office of University Research Services and the IRB conduct this review to protect the rights and welfare of human subjects involved in biomedical and behavioral research. In compliance with the aforementioned policy, this study received the proper surveillance and was granted permission to continue, approval number AG-94-026.

Design

The follow-up evaluation of OALP graduates was based on a descriptive design. Descriptive studies are primarily concerned with finding out “what is” (Borg & Gall, 1983). All OALP graduates were identified and then surveyed by a mailed questionnaire as to their opinions of, and participation in the program.

Population

The population for this study consisted of 171 graduates of the Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program from six classes spanning the years of 1982 to 1994. One hundred seventy-four persons have actually graduated, however, one participant

has since passed away, and two participants were unable to be contacted due to incomplete addresses. The population was determined from class directories provided by the OALP director and executive secretary.

Instrument Development

The Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program Follow-up Study of Graduates questionnaire was developed by the researcher and used to collect both quantitative and qualitative data (See Appendix B). Questions contained in the survey were derived following a review of the literature of past evaluational studies and instruments used in related studies of other agricultural leadership programs. Questions were also developed that corresponded to the objectives of the study.

The survey consisted of five sections which included: Background Information, Program Objectives, Organizational/Leadership Involvement and Activities, Leadership, and Program Improvements. The survey instrument was reviewed for content by a panel of experts which consisted of members of the researchers' advisory committee, the past director of the OALP, and the present director of the OALP. Further input regarding the format of the questionnaire was obtained from various faculty and individuals in the Department of Agricultural Education, Communications and 4-H Youth Development, Oklahoma State University.

A pilot test of the instrument was conducted by the researcher utilizing members of an intact graduate level Agricultural Education seminar course. These individuals

were questioned and provided input concerning the questionnaire format, clarity of questions, and willingness to respond to questions. As a result of the pilot test, the background information questions were clarified, and the Likert-type scale was simplified in the program objectives and leadership sections.

Collection of Data

The questionnaire was duplicated into booklet form and a packet was distributed through the US Mail in late April, 1994 to 171 OALP graduates. The packet included a cover letter describing the purpose and intent of the study (See Appendix C), the questionnaire, and a postage-paid envelope for the return of the completed questionnaire. Graduates were asked to return the completed questionnaire within the week.

A post card was mailed to non-respondents two weeks following the date of the initial mailing (See Appendix D). Non-respondents were reminded of the study being conducted and asked to return completed questionnaires or request another questionnaire. Surveys were received from 100 graduates (58.48 percent). In order to determine that the remaining 41.52 percent of the population were not different from the respondents, nonrespondents were "double-dipped" (Barrick, Miller, Van Tilburg, & Warmbrod, 1985, p. 23). A random sample of 10 percent (seven) of the nonrespondents was drawn. Telephone interviews were then conducted to obtain data from the sample using the questionnaire as an interview schedule. A t-test analysis

revealed no difference in rating of appropriateness and extent of accomplishment of program objectives, personal leadership skills, or participation scores between the respondent and nonrespondent groups. The nonrespondent group data were pooled with those of the respondent group giving a grand response rate total of 107 and 62.57 percent. Table I displays the distribution of respondents by class and in aggregate.

TABLE I
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDING OALP GRADUATES
BY CLASS AND IN AGGREGATE

	N of Class	N of Respondents	% of Class	% of Total Respondents
Class I	28	14	50.00	13.08
Class II	30	12	40.00	11.22
Class III	29	17	58.62	15.89
Class IV	25	20	80.00	18.69
Class V	29	23	79.31	21.49
Class VI	30	21	70.00	19.63
Total	171	107	(62.57%)	100.00

Analysis of Data

Demographic data were analyzed using frequencies and percentages and reported in the aggregate. Descriptive statistics or summary statistics (means and standard deviations) were employed to describe data from the four-point Likert-type scaled item responses in the "Program Objectives" and "Leadership" portions of the questionnaire. Leadership skills were measured by respondent self-reported change

from pre- to post program participation. Data were reported in the aggregate. The scale was designed so that the perceptions of participants could be rated on a scale of one to four with one being low and four being high. The real limits used for interpretation categories were the following: Low: 1.00-1.49; Moderate: 1.50-2.49; Above Average: 2.50-3.49; and High: 3.5-4.00

OALP graduates were questioned about their participation in organizations and activities since their participation in the OALP. Class VI data was not used due to the small amount of time having passed since their graduation from the program.

Participation and leadership involvement in organizations and activities was measured for Classes I through V by modifying Chapin's Social Participation Scale (1937). A participation scale was constructed and respondents were given a score that was calculated by using the following weighted scale: membership, one point; attendance, two points; committee membership, three points; and office held, four points. Based upon the previous research of Ladewig and Thomas (1987), and Brannon (1988), these scores were selected to put more emphasis on committee membership and officer involvement. The values were then summed to produce a range of scores from zero (no participation) to ten (a member who attended at least 25 percent of the meetings in the past year, served on a committee and served as an officer) (Weeks, 1989). An overall participation score was then calculated by adding each value per organization involved in. A composite of participation scores for respondents was then produced, and included the mean score and standard deviation. The average number of organizations participated in by respondents was also calculated. Self-reported

organizations were coded by the researcher and frequency counts of respondent participation were computed. Scores for leadership in organizations were determined by removing “membership” and “attendance categories” leaving “committee membership” and “office held” to make up the leadership scale (Weeks, 1989). A composite of leadership scores for all respondents was then produced, and included the mean and standard deviation. Qualitative responses from respondents concerning program improvements were categorized by the researcher and reported in aggregate form.

Chapin (1947) recorded reliability coefficients for the Social Participation Scale on several occasions. Reliability coefficients ranged from .87 to .97 with an interval of one week between tests. Because the scale is comprised of observable forms of social participation, it has strong internal validity by design.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

The purpose of this chapter is to present data that were collected to gather the perceptions of the graduates of the Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program (OALP) to describe the impact of the program on the participants. The data are organized according to and corresponding with the objectives of the study.

Findings Related to Objective 1

The first objective of the study was to update and describe demographic characteristics of the OALP participants. Selected characteristics included: gender, current marital status, change in marital status since participation in the OALP, ethnicity, highest education completed, completion of additional education since participation in the OALP, clarification of any such additional education, current occupation, changes in occupation since participation in the OALP, current residence, and changes in residence since participation in the OALP.

As shown in Table II, the majority of respondents were male.

TABLE II

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS AS TO GENDER

Gender	Frequency (N=107)	Percentage
Male	95	88.79
Female	9	8.41
No Response	3	2.80
Total	107	100.00

Data in Table III show that well over 80 percent of respondents described themselves as married, and less than 10 percent as single.

TABLE III

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS AS TO MARITAL STATUS

Status	Frequency (N=107)	Percentage
Single	9	8.41
Married	93	86.92
Separated	0	0.00
Divorced	2	1.87
No Response	3	2.80
Total	107	100.00

Data in Table IV indicate that 89.72 percent of respondents have had no change in marital status since participation in the OALP. Getting married since participation was the most frequently cited change that had occurred.

TABLE IV
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS AS TO
CHANGE IN MARITAL STATUS

Change in Status	Frequency (N=107)	Percentage
YES	7	6.54
NO	96	89.72
No Response	4	3.74
Total	107	100.00

Data in Table V indicate the ethnicity of respondents was predominantly white. Minorities represented only 2.81 percent. Asian Americans and Hispanic Americans were not represented.

TABLE V
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS AS TO ETHNICITY

Ethnicity	Frequency (N=107)	Percentage
White	99	92.52
African American	1	0.94
Native American	2	1.87
Asian American	0	0.00
Hispanic American	0	0.00
Other	0	0.00
No Response	5	4.67
Total	107	100.00

Respondents were asked to list the highest education level they had completed. The researcher categorized self-reported educational levels into the following

categories: High School Diploma; Some college, but no degree; Associate's degree; Bachelor's degree; Master's degree including Master of Science, Master of Business Administration, Master of Education and Master of Divinity; and Doctoral Degree.

Figure 1 indicates the frequency of responses in each of these categories. The highest level of education completed by the respondents was the Bachelor's degree, with the next highest levels being the Master's degree, and the Associate's degree. These three degrees incorporate 84.11 percent of respondents.

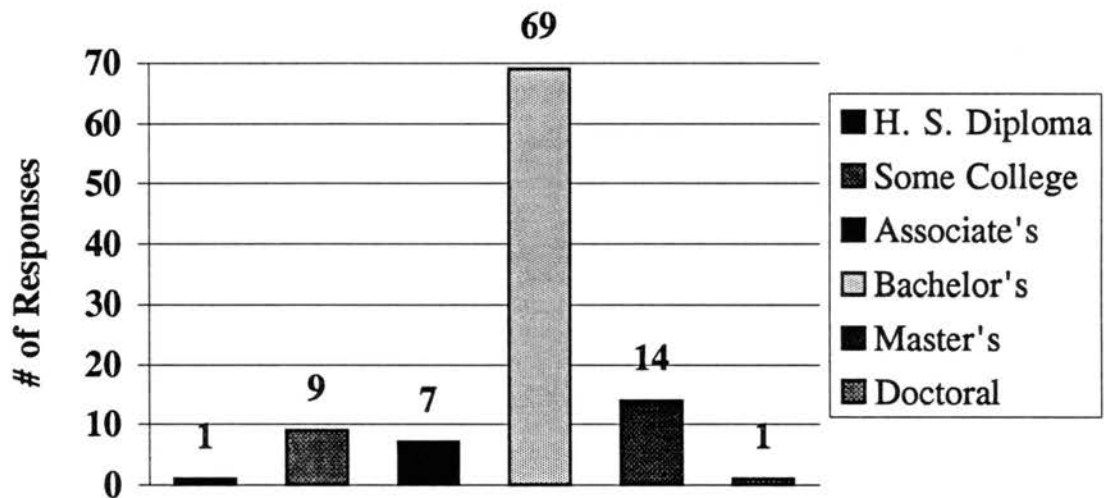


Figure 1: Distribution of Respondents as to Highest Education Completed

Table VI indicates that over 80 percent of respondents have not had a change in their level of education since participation in the OALP. However, 20.56 percent has had a change in their level of education since participation in the OALP.

TABLE VI
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS AS TO CHANGE IN EDUCATION
SINCE PARTICIPATION IN THE OALP

Change in Education	Frequency	Percentage
YES	22	20.56
NO	82	76.64
No Response	3	2.80
Total	107	100.00

Table VII data describes the type of change in level of education as indicated by the respondents choosing one of three options. Five respondents have completed additional college hours, eight respondents have completed a degree program, and nine respondents indicated completion of other types of education including: courses and programs from area vocational-technical schools, command and general staff college courses with the U.S. Army Reserve, National Rural Electric director's courses, and occupation-specific graduate school courses and programs.

TABLE VII
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS INDICATING A CHANGE
IN EDUCATION SINCE PARTICIPATION IN THE OALP

Change in Education	Frequency	Percentage
Completed Additional College Hours	5	23.73
Completed A Degree Program	8	36.36
Other	9	40.91
Total	22	100.00

Respondents were asked to list their current occupation. The researcher categorized self-reported occupational titles. The following single categories were developed: Production Agriculture which included farming, and ranching; Agribusiness which included responses indicating positions at businesses strictly concerned with agriculture (i.e. Co-Op manager, cotton warehouse manager, implement dealership manager, feed dealer, marketing manager for agriculture business); Financial Services including bankers, loan officers and investment brokers; Professional Agriculture including such positions as with the extension service, insurance companies, an auctioneer, a real estate appraiser, a welder, and trucking services. It also included those with positions in state agricultural services (i.e. Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, Oklahoma Conservation Commission); those with positions at associations for the promotion of the agriculture industry and agricultural products (i.e. Oklahoma Cattlemen's Association, Oklahoma Grain and Stock Producers); and instructors and program coordinators at Area Vocational & Technical Education schools. The Non-Agriculture Occupations category included those occupations not associated with agriculture or the agriculture industry. Other categories were developed such as Production Agriculture/Professional Agriculture which includes a combination of the previously mentioned occupations along with farming and/or ranching. Other categories are Production Agriculture/Non-Agriculture Business; Production Agriculture/Financial Services; and Production Agriculture/Elected Official.

Table VIII indicates the frequency of responses in the previously described categories. Over 65 percent of respondents were involved currently in the agriculture industry in some form or fashion whether it be strictly production agriculture, professional agriculture, agribusiness, or a combination of production agriculture and another professional occupation.

TABLE VIII
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS AS TO
CURRENT OCCUPATION

Current Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Production Agriculture	49	45.79
Financial Services	11	10.28
Production Agriculture/Professional Agriculture	10	9.35
Professional Agriculture	7	6.54
Non Agriculture Occupation	7	6.54
Production Agriculture/Financial Services	6	5.61
Agribusiness	5	4.67
Production Agriculture/Non Agriculture Business	2	1.87
Production Agriculture/Elected Official	1	0.94
No Response	9	8.41
Total	107	100.00

Table IX indicates that occupational status is relatively stable as the majority of respondents have not changed their occupation since participation in the OALP. However, 15.89 percent indicated some change in occupation had occurred. Changes in occupation as noted by these respondents included downsizing or totally liquidating their farming and/or ranching operations and finding full-time employment elsewhere, or part-time employment to subsidize their income. New occupations were described by

respondents and included taking positions with state government agencies, in car sales, as a pastor, in the medical field, as a co-op manager, as a ranch manager, as a mechanic, and as an insurance salesman.

TABLE IX
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS AS TO CHANGE IN OCCUPATION
SINCE PARTICIPATION IN THE OALP

Change in Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
YES	17	15.89
NO	87	81.31
No Response	3	2.80
Total	107	100.00

Respondents were asked to select the location of their residence from a list of seven options including: Farm; Rural Area, but not a farm; Town <2500; City 2500 to 9,999; City 10,000 to 29,999; City 30,000 to 100,000; and City > 100,000. Figure 2 shows the percentage of responses selected using the different locations offered. Over 50 percent of the respondents live on a farm. Ten percent live in a city with a population of 2,500 to 9,999. Seven percent each live in a town of less than 2,500, in a rural area but not on a farm, and in a city with a population of 10,000 to 29,999.

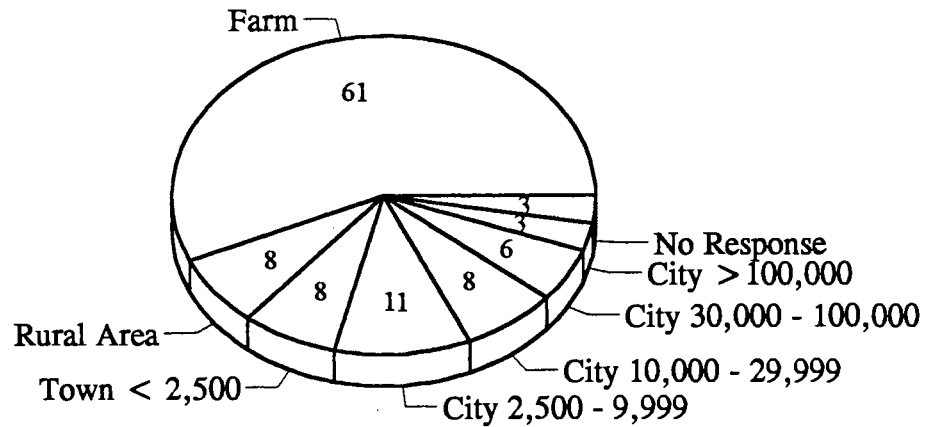


Figure 2: Distribution of Respondents as to Current Residence

Table X data indicates that 74.77 percent of respondents have had no change in residence since participation in the OALP. When considering the occupation of the majority of respondents, the decreased mobility of participants is explained. The changes that were described overwhelmingly indicated that respondents had moved from the farm to a rural area, a town, or a city.

TABLE X

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS AS TO CHANGE IN RESIDENCE
SINCE PARTICIPATION IN THE OALP

Change in Residence	Frequency	Percentage
YES	24	22.43
NO	80	74.77
No Response	3	2.80
Total	107	100.00

Findings Related to Objective 2

Objective two of the study was to describe the participants' perceptions of the appropriateness of the OALP objectives and the extent of accomplishment of each. Tables XI through XVI indicate the mean, standard deviation and interpretation of OALP objectives as reported by Class I through Class VI respondents, respectively. It can be noted that the perceptions of class members were similar in their rating of objectives. Data in these tables indicate that respondents from Classes I, II, IV, and V rated objective nine, "Broaden your perspective on the major issues affecting agriculture," as both highly appropriate and highly accomplished. Class III respondents' perceptions of the OALP objectives, as presented in Table XIII, differed from other classes' perceptions in that none of the OALP objectives were rated both highly appropriate and highly accomplished. In fact, for Class III, all eleven objectives lowered in mean from appropriateness to extent accomplished with objective seven, "Broaden your understanding of how U.S. cultural systems affect agriculture in Oklahoma," and objective eight, "Broaden your understanding of how U.S. social systems affect agriculture in Oklahoma," being only moderately accomplished. Class V rated objective seven as being only moderately accomplished as well.

Data in Table XVI indicate that Class VI respondents rated objective two, "Broaden your understanding of Oklahoma's agricultural industry in relation to state problems and opportunities," as both highly appropriate and highly accomplished.

Table XVII indicates the mean of means, standard deviation, and interpretation for the OALP objectives based on the perceptions of respondents from Class I through Class VI. Once again, objective nine is the only objective rated high in both appropriateness and extent accomplished. Appropriateness and extent of accomplishment of all other objectives also remains similar to individual class interpretations. Overall, the majority of the objectives were rated highly appropriate and accomplished to the extent of above average. However, objectives seven and eight consistently were rated lower in appropriateness and even lower in the extent of accomplishment.

TABLE XI

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF CLASS I RESPONDENTS AS TO APPROPRIATENESS OF OALP OBJECTIVES AND EXTENT ACCOMPLISHED

Objective	Appropriateness		Interpretation	Extent Accomplished		Interpretation
	Mean	S.D.		Mean	S.D.	
1. Broaden your understanding of Oklahoma's agricultural industry in relation to <u>local</u> problems and opportunities.	3.50	0.52	High	3.08	0.76	Above Average
2. Broaden your understanding of Oklahoma's agricultural industry in relation to <u>state</u> problems and opportunities.	3.50	0.66	High	3.08	0.86	Above Average
3. Broaden your understanding of Oklahoma's agricultural industry in relation to <u>national</u> problems and opportunities.	3.50	0.66	High	3.15	0.90	Above Average
4. Broaden your understanding of Oklahoma's agricultural industry in relation to <u>international</u> problems and opportunities.	3.20	1.00	Above Average	3.08	1.04	Above Average
5. Broaden your understanding of how the U.S. <u>economic system</u> affects agriculture in Oklahoma.	3.40	0.70	Above Average	3.31	0.95	Above Average
6. Broaden your understanding of how the U.S. <u>political system</u> affects agriculture in Oklahoma.	3.62	0.51	High	3.38	0.87	Above Average
7. Broaden your understanding of how U.S. <u>cultural systems</u> affect agriculture in Oklahoma.	3.08	0.64	Above Average	2.62	0.77	Above Average
8. Broaden your understanding of how U.S. <u>social systems</u> affect agriculture in Oklahoma.	3.00	0.71	Above Average	2.46	0.78	Above Average
9. Broaden your perspective on the <u>major issues</u> affecting agriculture.	3.54	0.66	High	3.50	0.78	High
10. Increase your ability to <u>analyze</u> the complex problems affecting Oklahoma agriculture.	3.62	0.51	High	2.85	0.82	Above Average
11. Increase your ability to <u>react to</u> the complex problems affecting Oklahoma agriculture.	3.31	0.75	Above Average	2.77	0.83	Above Average

TABLE XII

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF CLASS II RESPONDENTS AS TO APPROPRIATENESS OF OALP OBJECTIVES
AND EXTENT ACCOMPLISHED

Objective	Appropriateness		Interpretation	Extent Accomplished		Interpretation
	Mean	S.D.		Mean	S.D.	
1. Broaden your understanding of Oklahoma's agricultural industry in relation to <u>local</u> problems and opportunities.	3.42	0.79	Above Average	3.00	0.74	Above Average
2. Broaden your understanding of Oklahoma's agricultural industry in relation to <u>state</u> problems and opportunities.	3.50	0.52	High	3.17	0.58	Above Average
3. Broaden your understanding of Oklahoma's agricultural industry in relation to <u>national</u> problems and opportunities.	3.67	0.49	High	3.00	0.60	Above Average
4. Broaden your understanding of Oklahoma's agricultural industry in relation to <u>international</u> problems and opportunities.	3.70	0.50	High	3.17	0.58	Above Average
5. Broaden your understanding of how the U.S. <u>economic system</u> affects agriculture in Oklahoma.	3.50	0.80	High	3.17	0.72	Above Average
6. Broaden your understanding of how the U.S. <u>political system</u> affects agriculture in Oklahoma.	3.67	0.78	High	3.17	0.72	Above Average
7. Broaden your understanding of how U.S. <u>cultural systems</u> affect agriculture in Oklahoma.	3.25	0.75	Above Average	2.67	1.07	Above Average
8. Broaden your understanding of how U.S. <u>social systems</u> affect agriculture in Oklahoma.	3.25	0.62	Above Average	2.75	0.87	Above Average
9. Broaden your perspective on the <u>major issues</u> affecting agriculture.	3.92	0.29	High	3.58	0.51	High
10. Increase your ability to <u>analyze</u> the complex problems affecting Oklahoma agriculture.	3.75	0.45	High	3.17	0.72	Above Average
11. Increase your ability to <u>react to</u> the complex problems affecting Oklahoma agriculture.	3.75	0.45	High	3.33	0.78	Above Average

TABLE XIII

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF CLASS III RESPONDENTS AS TO APPROPRIATENESS OF OALP OBJECTIVES
AND EXTENT ACCOMPLISHED

Objective	Appropriateness		Interpretation	Extent Accomplished		Interpretation
	Mean	S.D.		Mean	S.D.	
1. Broaden your understanding of Oklahoma's agricultural industry in relation to <u>local</u> problems and opportunities.	3.60	0.51	High	3.07	0.71	Above Average
2. Broaden your understanding of Oklahoma's agricultural industry in relation to <u>state</u> problems and opportunities.	3.76	0.44	High	3.24	0.75	Above Average
3. Broaden your understanding of Oklahoma's agricultural industry in relation to <u>national</u> problems and opportunities.	3.94	0.24	High	3.29	0.77	Above Average
4. Broaden your understanding of Oklahoma's agricultural industry in relation to <u>international</u> problems and opportunities.	3.60	0.50	High	2.76	0.90	Above Average
5. Broaden your understanding of how the U.S. <u>economic system</u> affects agriculture in Oklahoma.	3.70	0.50	High	2.88	0.86	Above Average
6. Broaden your understanding of how the U.S. <u>political system</u> affects agriculture in Oklahoma.	3.71	0.47	High	3.00	0.87	Above Average
7. Broaden your understanding of how U.S. <u>cultural systems</u> affect agriculture in Oklahoma.	3.12	0.78	Above Average	2.24	0.75	Moderate
8. Broaden your understanding of how U.S. <u>social systems</u> affect agriculture in Oklahoma.	3.12	0.74	Above Average	2.47	0.83	Moderate
9. Broaden your perspective on the <u>major issues</u> affecting agriculture.	3.82	0.39	High	3.47	0.51	Above Average
10. Increase your ability to <u>analyze</u> the complex problems affecting Oklahoma agriculture.	3.71	0.47	High	3.18	0.81	Above Average
11. Increase your ability to <u>react to</u> the complex problems affecting Oklahoma agriculture.	3.59	0.51	High	3.12	0.93	Above Average

TABLE XIV

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF CLASS IV RESPONDENTS AS TO APPROPRIATENESS OF OALP OBJECTIVES
AND EXTENT ACCOMPLISHED

Objective	Appropriateness		Interpretation	Extent Accomplished		Interpretation
	Mean	S.D.		Mean	S.D.	
1. Broaden your understanding of Oklahoma's agricultural industry in relation to <u>local</u> problems and opportunities.	3.47	0.51	Above Average	3.26	0.57	Above Average
2. Broaden your understanding of Oklahoma's agricultural industry in relation to <u>state</u> problems and opportunities.	3.47	0.61	Above Average	3.25	0.55	Above Average
3. Broaden your understanding of Oklahoma's agricultural industry in relation to <u>national</u> problems and opportunities.	3.55	0.51	High	3.35	0.49	Above Average
4. Broaden your understanding of Oklahoma's agricultural industry in relation to <u>international</u> problems and opportunities.	3.70	0.50	High	3.15	0.75	Above Average
5. Broaden your understanding of how the U.S. <u>economic system</u> affects agriculture in Oklahoma.	3.30	0.70	Above Average	2.95	0.76	Above Average
6. Broaden your understanding of how the U.S. <u>political system</u> affects agriculture in Oklahoma.	3.65	0.67	High	3.45	0.69	Above Average
7. Broaden your understanding of how U.S. <u>cultural systems</u> affect agriculture in Oklahoma.	2.95	0.57	Above Average	2.60	0.88	Above Average
8. Broaden your understanding of how U.S. <u>social systems</u> affect agriculture in Oklahoma.	2.95	0.69	Above Average	2.79	0.83	Above Average
9. Broaden your perspective on the <u>major issues</u> affecting agriculture.	3.75	0.44	High	3.55	0.76	High
10. Increase your ability to <u>analyze</u> the complex problems affecting Oklahoma agriculture.	3.37	0.82	Above Average	3.05	0.83	Above Average
11. Increase your ability to <u>react to</u> the complex problems affecting Oklahoma agriculture.	3.37	0.60	Above Average	3.15	0.59	Above Average

TABLE XV

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF CLASS V RESPONDENTS AS TO APPROPRIATENESS OF OALP OBJECTIVES
AND EXTENT ACCOMPLISHED

Objective	Appropriateness		Interpretation	Extent Accomplished		Interpretation
	Mean	S.D.		Mean	S.D.	
1. Broaden your understanding of Oklahoma's agricultural industry in relation to <u>local</u> problems and opportunities.	3.61	0.58	High	3.51	0.59	High
2. Broaden your understanding of Oklahoma's agricultural industry in relation to <u>state</u> problems and opportunities.	3.74	0.45	High	3.50	0.67	High
3. Broaden your understanding of Oklahoma's agricultural industry in relation to <u>national</u> problems and opportunities.	3.87	0.34	High	3.32	0.63	Above Average
4. Broaden your understanding of Oklahoma's agricultural industry in relation to <u>international</u> problems and opportunities.	3.70	0.40	High	3.32	0.63	Above Average
5. Broaden your understanding of how the U.S. <u>economic system</u> affects agriculture in Oklahoma.	3.60	0.70	High	2.96	0.77	Above Average
6. Broaden your understanding of how the U.S. <u>political system</u> affects agriculture in Oklahoma.	3.78	0.42	High	3.57	0.59	High
7. Broaden your understanding of how U.S. <u>cultural systems</u> affect agriculture in Oklahoma.	3.04	0.82	Above Average	2.48	0.91	Moderate
8. Broaden your understanding of how U.S. <u>social systems</u> affect agriculture in Oklahoma.	3.22	0.67	Above Average	2.73	0.82	Above Average
9. Broaden your perspective on the <u>major issues</u> affecting agriculture.	3.74	0.54	High	3.52	0.59	High
10. Increase your ability to <u>analyze</u> the complex problems affecting Oklahoma agriculture.	3.52	0.59	High	3.17	0.78	Above Average
11. Increase your ability to <u>react to</u> the complex problems affecting Oklahoma agriculture.	3.61	0.66	High	3.17	0.78	Above Average

TABLE XVI

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF CLASS VI RESPONDENTS AS TO APPROPRIATENESS OF OALP OBJECTIVES AND EXTENT ACCOMPLISHED

Objective	Appropriateness		Interpretation	Extent Accomplished		Interpretation
	Mean	S.D.		Mean	S.D.	
1. Broaden your understanding of Oklahoma's agricultural industry in relation to <u>local</u> problems and opportunities.	3.55	0.60	High	3.35	0.67	Above Average
2. Broaden your understanding of Oklahoma's agricultural industry in relation to <u>state</u> problems and opportunities.	3.70	0.47	High	3.55	0.69	High
3. Broaden your understanding of Oklahoma's agricultural industry in relation to <u>national</u> problems and opportunities.	3.55	0.60	High	3.20	0.83	Above Average
4. Broaden your understanding of Oklahoma's agricultural industry in relation to <u>international</u> problems and opportunities.	3.40	0.70	Above Average	3.35	0.59	Above Average
5. Broaden your understanding of how the U.S. <u>economic system</u> affects agriculture in Oklahoma.	3.50	0.50	High	3.15	0.75	Above Average
6. Broaden your understanding of how the U.S. <u>political system</u> affects agriculture in Oklahoma.	3.70	0.47	High	3.45	0.69	Above Average
7. Broaden your understanding of how U.S. <u>cultural systems</u> affect agriculture in Oklahoma.	3.15	0.81	Above Average	3.05	0.89	Above Average
8. Broaden your understanding of how U.S. <u>social systems</u> affect agriculture in Oklahoma.	2.95	0.69	Above Average	3.00	0.86	Above Average
9. Broaden your perspective on the <u>major issues</u> affecting agriculture.	3.70	0.47	High	3.45	0.76	Above Average
10. Increase your ability to <u>analyze</u> the complex problems affecting Oklahoma agriculture.	3.45	0.69	Above Average	3.10	0.72	Above Average
11. Increase your ability to <u>react to</u> the complex problems affecting Oklahoma agriculture.	3.45	0.52	Above Average	3.25	0.72	Above Average

TABLE XVII

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF CLASS I THROUGH CLASS VI COMBINED RESPONSES
AS TO APPROPRIATENESS OF OALP OBJECTIVES AND EXTENT ACCOMPLISHED

Objective	Appropriateness		Interpretation	Extent Accomplished		Interpretation
	Mean	S.D.		Mean	S.D.	
1. Broaden your understanding of Oklahoma's agricultural industry in relation to <u>local</u> problems and opportunities.	3.50	0.09	High	3.13	0.12	Above Average
2. Broaden your understanding of Oklahoma's agricultural industry in relation to <u>state</u> problems and opportunities.	3.53	0.10	High	3.31	0.13	Above Average
3. Broaden your understanding of Oklahoma's agricultural industry in relation to <u>national</u> problems and opportunities.	3.51	0.15	High	2.99	0.11	Above Average
4. Broaden your understanding of Oklahoma's agricultural industry in relation to <u>international</u> problems and opportunities.	3.51	0.10	High	3.18	0.09	Above Average
5. Broaden your understanding of how the U.S. <u>economic system</u> affects agriculture in Oklahoma.	3.50	0.10	High	3.01	0.15	Above Average
6. Broaden your understanding of how the U.S. <u>political system</u> affects agriculture in Oklahoma.	3.59	0.08	High	3.27	0.11	Above Average
7. Broaden your understanding of how U.S. <u>cultural systems</u> affect agriculture in Oklahoma.	3.05	0.13	Above Average	2.80	0.13	Above Average
8. Broaden your understanding of how U.S. <u>social systems</u> affect agriculture in Oklahoma.	2.86	0.21	Above Average	2.75	0.13	Above Average
9. Broaden your perspective on the <u>major issues</u> affecting agriculture.	3.59	0.19	High	3.52	0.16	High
10. Increase your ability to <u>analyze</u> the complex problems affecting Oklahoma agriculture.	3.51	0.19	High	2.98	0.13	Above Average
11. Increase your ability to <u>react to</u> the complex problems affecting Oklahoma agriculture.	3.51	0.14	High	3.11	0.14	Above Average

Findings Related to Objective 3

Objective three was to describe the participants' perceptions of the extent of participation and leadership involvement in organizations and activities since participation in the OALP. A participation score was computed by adding one point for membership, two points for attendance, three points for committee membership, and four points for holding office. A composite participation score was calculated by totaling each individual score per organization and/or activity for each respondent. Table XVIII displays the frequencies of total participation scores for respondents from Classes I through V. Class VI data was not utilized in this portion of the study. Over 50 percent of respondents' scores ranged from 0 to 29 with the mean score being 28.11.

The researcher categorized respondents' self-reported organizations. Some respondents listed acronyms of organizations to which they belonged leaving interpretation up to the researcher. The researcher consulted with members of the Department of Agricultural Education, Communications and 4-H Youth Development, Oklahoma State University, concerning the acronyms and assignment to categories. The following categories were developed: agricultural organizations/associations, civic associations, church or religious organizations, social organizations, school/education associations, political associations, professional associations, and military associations.

TABLE XVIII
 DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS' COMPOSITE
 PARTICIPATION SCORES

Composite Scale Score	Frequency (n=86)	Percentage
0 - 4	6	6.98
5 - 9	4	4.65
10-14	11	12.79
15-19	11	12.79
20-24	12	13.95
25-29	8	9.30
30-34	5	5.81
35-39	7	8.14
40-44	6	6.98
45-49	5	5.81
50-54	1	1.16
55-59	5	5.81
60-64	2	2.33
65-69	0	0.00
70-74	2	2.33
75-79	0	0.00
80-84	0	0.00
85-89	1	1.16
Mean Score:	28.11	
Standard Deviation	18.28	

Table XIX indicates the frequency of responses in the previously described categories. The number of associations individual participants belonged to ranged from 0 to 15 with a mean of 4.66 organizations reported. These findings are consistent with those studies that have shown multiple membership as a common occurrence (Scott, 1957; Hyman and Wright, 1971; and Bolton, 1991) but vary in that the majority of participants belonged to more than two associations.

One hundred seventy-eight memberships in agricultural organizations were listed by respondents followed by civic organizations at 90 memberships.

TABLE XIX
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS AS TO
ORGANIZATIONAL PARTICIPATION

Organization	Frequency
Agricultural	178
Civic	90
Church	48
Social	31
School	25
Political	16
Professional	11
Military	2
Total	401

Respondents' leadership in organizations and activities was computed by removing "membership" and "attendance" from the participation scale score. "Committee membership" and "office held" remained to constitute the leadership scale score. Table XX displays the distribution of composite leadership scores for respondents from Classes I through V. Class VI data was not used in this portion of the study. Over 50 percent of respondents' leadership scores ranged from 0 to 14. The mean leadership score was 16.15.

TABLE XX
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS' COMPOSITE
LEADERSHIP SCORES

Composite Scale Score	Frequency (n=86)	Percentage
0 - 4	12	13.95
5 - 9	17	19.78
10-14	22	25.58
15-19	5	5.81
20-24	8	9.30
25-29	7	8.14
30-34	6	6.98
35-39	3	3.49
40-44	1	1.16
45-49	3	3.49
50-54	0	0.00
55-59	1	1.16
Mean	16.15	
Standard Deviation	12.55	

Findings Related to Objective 4

Objective four was to describe the participants' perceptions of the impact of the OALP on selected leadership skills. This impact was measured by respondent self-reported change from pre- to post-program participation. Table XXI indicates the mean, standard deviation, interpretation, and gain or loss in mean of respondents' leadership skills both prior to and after participation in the OALP. T-values are also indicated. Kerlinger (1986) noted that while Likert-type data is ordinal in nature, it is acceptable and practical to treat it as interval data and subject it to statistical analysis as long as care is taken in the interpretation of the findings. Table XXI indicates an

increase in means of all leadership statements. The greatest gain was indicated in statement nine “the network of people you may contact for help or information.” There was found to be a significant difference in all of the responses of study participants.

Findings Related to Objective 5

Objective five was to identify areas of suggested program improvement(s) based on responses of participants. The researcher categorized reported responses to the open-ended questions in the “program improvements” section of the questionnaire. In the following tables, the total number of responses may not equal the total number of respondents as more than one suggestion was given by some respondents. Question one asked program graduates “If additional funding was available, what would you add to the OALP?” Reported answers can be found in Appendix E. Table XXII indicates the categorized responses. The top five suggestions for additions to the OALP included: joint interaction and programs with other Agricultural Leadership Program participants from across the United States, increased involvement, interaction and activities concerning agricultural policymaking with legislators both at the state and national levels, additional tours of various agricultural sites within the state of Oklahoma, additional tours of various agricultural sites outside the state of Oklahoma, and broaden spousal involvement and activities.

TABLE XXI

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF CLASS I THROUGH CLASS VI COMBINED RESPONDENTS' SELF REPORTED CHANGES IN LEADERSHIP SKILLS FROM PRE- TO POST-PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

Statement	Before <u>Mean</u> S.D.	Interpretation	After <u>Mean</u> S.D.	Interpretation	Gain	t-value
1. Your willingness to accept leadership responsibility.	<u>2.67</u> 0.82	Above Average	<u>3.44</u> 0.55	Above Average	0.77	9.62*
2. Knowledge of your limits and strengths as a leader.	<u>2.38</u> 0.74	Moderate	<u>3.34</u> 0.58	Above Average	0.96	12.85*
3. Your skills in solving problems.	<u>2.81</u> 0.65	Above Average	<u>3.24</u> 0.58	Above Average	0.43	7.98*
4. Your skills in decision making.	<u>2.82</u> 0.66	Above Average	<u>3.31</u> 0.56	Above Average	0.49	8.23*
5. Confidence in expressing your opinions in large group settings.	<u>2.32</u> 0.82	Moderate	<u>3.51</u> 0.64	High	1.19	15.61*
6. Confidence in answering questions in large group settings.	<u>2.30</u> 0.80	Moderate	<u>3.45</u> 0.64	Above Average	1.15	18.12*
7. The amount of detail work you delegate to others.	<u>2.29</u> 0.69	Moderate	<u>2.97</u> 0.69	Above Average	0.68	10.36*
8. The amount of authority you delegate to others .	<u>2.33</u> 0.65	Moderate	<u>3.00</u> 0.70	Above Average	0.67	9.77*
9. The network of people you may contact for help or information.	<u>2.11</u> 0.69	Moderate	<u>3.78</u> 0.46	High	1.67	20.73*
10. The extent to which you involve others in establishing or setting goals.	<u>2.08</u> 0.66	Moderate	<u>3.01</u> 0.65	Above Average	0.93	14.85*

* p< .0001

TABLE XXII

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES AS TO ADDITIONS TO THE OALP
IF INCREASED FUNDING WAS AVAILABLE

Addition	Frequency
Joint programs/meetings with other ALP participants from across the U.S.	15
Increased state and national political training	15
Additional agricultural tours in Oklahoma	14
Additional agricultural tours across the U.S.	13
Broaden spousal involvement and activities	10
Extra meetings - Miscellaneous topics	10
Increase the number of high profile speakers	5
Longer stays with International families	3
Increased alumni involvement	3
No additions needed or suggestions known	11

Respondents were asked to reply to the question “If current funding was reduced, what would you eliminate from the OALP?” Reported answers can be found in Appendix F. The top three categories were: to eliminate the Kansas City trip, eliminate some of the in-state meetings and seminars, and shorten and/or condense in-state meetings and seminars. Other answers included to eliminate and/or shorten the International tour, and the trip to Washington D.C., and share more of the cost of the program with participants. Frequency of each answer can be found in Table XXIII.

TABLE XXIII

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES AS TO ELIMINATIONS
FROM THE OALP IF FUNDING WAS DECREASED

Eliminate	Frequency
Trip to Kansas City	22
Various meetings and seminars	20
Shorten /Condense meetings and seminars	10
Shorten international tour	10
International tour	6
Shorten trip to Washington D.C.	4
Share costs with participants	3
Trip to Washington D.C.	2
Paid meals and hotels	2
Limit class size	2
Four year class cycle vs. two year class cycle	1
No eliminations needed or suggestions known	15

OALP participants were asked to list their personal objectives for entering the program (See Appendix G). The top three categories included: to learn, and/or improve upon leadership skills; to build a network of acquaintances in the agriculture industry; and to broaden knowledge and understanding of Oklahoma agriculture. Other personal objectives mentioned were to broaden knowledge of policy and politics involved in, and affecting agriculture, especially Oklahoma agriculture; and to increase awareness of issues that affect Oklahoma agriculture. Frequency of responses is presented in Table XXIV.

TABLE XXIV

**DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS' PERSONAL OBJECTIVES FOR ENTERING
THE OKLAHOMA AGRICULTURAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAM**

Objectives	Frequency
Improve leadership skills	37
Networking	34
Broaden knowledge of agriculture	32
Broaden knowledge of policy and politics affecting agriculture	13
Increase awareness of issues affecting Oklahoma agriculture	13
Personal development	10
Broaden horizons	8
New opportunity	4
Travel abroad	3
Miscellaneous	3
No Response	1

Data in Table XXV indicates the frequency of responses to the question "What do you foresee as trends in Oklahoma agriculture that should be addressed in future classes?" Appendix H lists all responses given. Four major trends and the need for further study of each included: increased governmental legislation, regulations and control; environmental issues; diversification of production agriculture and alternatives; and larger, corporately owned farming operations. The need for a cooperative and more unified voice in agriculture and less government funding available for farmers were also listed.

TABLE XXV

**DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES AS TO TRENDS IN OKLAHOMA
AGRICULTURE THAT SHOULD BE ADDRESSED
IN FUTURE CLASSES**

Trends	Frequency
Increased governmental legislation, regulations, and control	24
Environmental issues, concerns, and legislation	22
Diversification of agricultural production/Alternative agriculture	15
Corporate farming	10
Cooperative, unified voice in agriculture greatly needed	9
Less government funding available	8
Decrease in farm population	8
Economic/financial concerns	8
Private property rights	6
Vertical integration	5
Value added products	5
Communal ownership and block marketing	4
Attracting agricultural businesses to Oklahoma	4
Animal rights issues	3
Water rights issues	2
Rural development	2
Increasing average age of farmers	2
Decrease in importance of Agriculture	2
Finding sources of outside income	1
Agriculture's decrease in percentage of gross state product	1

Participants overwhelmingly responded "YES" when asked, "Would you again elect to participate in the OALP?" as data in Table XXVI indicates.

TABLE XXVI

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS AS TO ELECTING TO
PARTICIPATE IN THE OALP AGAIN OR NOT

Category	Frequency	Percentage
YES	104	97.19
NO	1	0.94
No Response	2	1.87
Total	107	100.00

Table XXVII shows the distribution of respondents that answered the question “Have you actively promoted the OALP?” Again, respondents answered an overwhelming “YES”.

TABLE XXVII

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS AS TO ACTIVELY
PROMOTING THE OALP OR NOT

Category	Frequency	Percentage
YES	103	96.26
NO	2	1.87
No Response	2	1.87
Total	107	100.00

Respondents were asked to please explain their promotion or non-promotion of the OALP (See Appendix I). The majority of respondents revealed that they have recruited future members of OALP classes by talking to acquaintances and agriculture industry people, sending in nominations, and encouraging eligible applicants to

complete an application form. Through word-of-mouth personal contacts, the respondents promote the OALP. Other forms of promotion included giving presentations to various local, civic and state organizations about different aspects of the program, soliciting funds from agriculture businesses, sending in personal donations, participating in the OALP Alumni Association, and on the advisory board, and participating in various media events and interviews. Table XXVIII shows the frequency of responses pertaining to this question.

TABLE XXVIII

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES AS TO PROMOTION OF THE
OKLAHOMA AGRICULTURAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Promotional Activity	Frequency
Recruited members	77
Gave presentations to interested organizations	17
Solicited funds	8
Donated money	8
Alumni Association member	3
Media promotions	3
Advisory Board member	2
Non-Active in promoting OALP	3

Additional comments and suggestions from respondents can be found in

Appendix J.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this study was to conduct a follow up of graduates of the Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program to gather their perceptions about the program. The objectives of the study were the following:

1. To update and describe the demographic characteristics of the OALP participants.
2. To describe the participants' perceptions of the appropriateness of the objectives of the OALP and the extent of accomplishment of each.
3. To describe the participants' perceptions of the extent of participation and leadership involvement in organizations and activities since participation in the OALP.
4. To describe the participants' perceptions of the impact of the OALP on selected leadership skills.
5. To identify areas of suggested program improvement(s) based on responses of participants.

For the purpose of this study the following assumptions were made:

1. The responses, opinions, and perceptions obtained from the questionnaire were answered honestly and conscientiously by the OALP graduates.

2. The OALP graduates surveyed would be able to recall accurately their situation in life prior to participation in the OALP and since participation occurred.

3. The responses to perception statements would serve as indicators of the impact of the Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program on participants.

The population of this study included 171 graduates of the Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program from six classes spanning the years 1982 through 1994. Questionnaires were mailed to the graduates in the Spring of 1994 to solicit perceptions and opinions. One hundred graduates returned a completed questionnaire. Follow-up of non-respondents was conducted by telephoning a random sample of nonrespondents and using the questionnaire as an interview schedule. T-test analyses indicated that there was no difference between respondent and nonrespondent groups. Data collected from nonrespondents was pooled with that of respondents giving a total response rate of 107 and 62.57 percent.

Table XXIX summarizes the personal characteristics of the respondents. Demographic information arranged into a profile indicates the respondents were overwhelmingly married (86 percent), white (92 percent), males (88 percent). The majority of respondents held a bachelor's degree (69 total), were employed in production agriculture (45 percent), and lived on a farm (57 percent).

TABLE XXIX
PROFILE OF RESPONDING OALP GRADUATES

Variable		Percentage
Gender	Male	88.79
Ethnicity	White	92.52
Marital Status	Married	86.92
Highest Education Completed	Bachelor's	64.49
Current Occupation	Production Agriculture	45.79
Current Residence	Farm	57.01

Objectives of the OALP were ranked highly appropriate for the most part, and consistently accomplished to the extent of above average with the exception of numbers seven and eight. Throughout the six classes, and overall, the mean ranking for extent accomplished of objective seven "Broaden your understanding of how U.S. social systems affect agriculture in Oklahoma," and the mean ranking for extent accomplished of objective eight "Broaden your understanding of how U.S. social systems affect agriculture in Oklahoma," decreases from the mean of appropriateness anywhere from 0.30 to 0.50 and above.

Respondents' organizational participation scores ranged from 0 to 89 with the majority ranging from 0 to 29. Leadership scores ranged from 0 to 59 with the majority ranging from 0 to 14. Respondents from Classes I through V indicated a total of 401 memberships in various organizations with 178 of those being memberships in agricultural organizations. The average number of organizations listed was four. Data from respondents' self-reported changes in leadership skills from pre-to post-program

participation indicated significant increases in means of all leadership statements, especially in the areas of networking, and building confidence.

Respondents had a variety of ideas and suggestions as to how best to use additional funds if available and what to eliminate if funding was reduced. Ideas for additional programs and increased study were categorized by the researcher. "Joint meetings with other Agricultural Leadership Program participants", and "increased state and national political training" were both mentioned 15 times. "Eliminating the Kansas City trip" was mentioned 22 times. Personal objectives of respondents were similar as "improving leadership skills" and "networking" were listed by 37 respondents and 34 respondents, respectively. "Broadening knowledge of agriculture" was listed as a personal objective by 32 respondents. Trends in Oklahoma agriculture that respondents think should be addressed in future classes included the increased governmental legislation and control, a variety of environmental issues, and the need for diversification in agricultural production.

Ninety-seven percent of the respondents indicated that they would again elect to participate in the OALP. Ninety-six percent of the respondents indicated that they actively promote the OALP with recruiting members through word-of-mouth and personal contacts being listed by 77 respondents. Through additional comments and suggestions, participants indicated that the OALP was a valuable program and a great opportunity.

Conclusions

Based on the analyses of data collected for this study, and referring to the assumptions made prior to the study, conclusions were drawn concerning the impact and effectiveness of the Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program. The conclusions are listed in accordance with the objectives of the study.

Conclusions Relating to Objective 1

1. The typical OALP respondent was a white, married male who held a Bachelor's degree, lived on a farm, and was involved in some form of production agriculture.
2. Since participation in the OALP, respondents have remained overwhelmingly stable in marital status and occupation, and non-mobile in residence. Stability in occupation and non-mobility in residence would seem to go hand-in-hand as it would be difficult to relocate farming and/or ranching operations.
3. A limited number of qualified females and minorities have benefited through participation in the OALP.

Conclusions Relating to Objective 2

1. Respondents perceived objectives of the OALP to be highly appropriate.

2. Respondents did not perceive the extent of accomplishment of objectives as high as they are thought to be appropriate.

3. Ranking was consistently lower on accomplishment of objectives concerning respondents' understanding of how U.S. cultural systems and U.S. social systems affect agriculture in Oklahoma.

4. Respondents highly accomplished the objective of broadening their perspectives on the major issues affecting agriculture.

Conclusions Relating to Objective 3

1. Respondents held a large number of memberships in a variety of community voluntary associations.

2. Respondents were highly involved in agricultural organizations and civic organizations.

Conclusions Relating to Objective 4

1. Respondents perceived that the program directly impacted their leadership skills and development in a positive way.

2. Respondents indicated increased networking skills, increased confidence in expressing their opinions in large group settings, and increased confidence in answering questions in a large group setting.

Conclusions Relating to Objective 5

1. If additional funding were available, respondents indicated that they would add joint meetings or programs with other Agricultural Leadership Programs from across the United States and increase the amount of state and national political training participants receive.

2. If funding were to be reduced, respondents indicated that they would eliminate the trip to Kansas City, Missouri.

3. The personal objectives of increasing leadership and networking skills were listed by respondents. In looking at the conclusions for Objective 4, it would appear that these personal objectives were at least addressed if not reached.

4. Respondents felt that a foreseeable trend in Oklahoma agriculture that should be addressed in future classes included the increased governmental legislation, regulations, and control, and environmental issues.

5. Respondents would again elect to participate in the OALP.

6. Respondents actively promote the OALP through word-of-mouth and personal contacts.

Recommendations

Based on the aforementioned findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are made for consideration:

1. Stakeholders in the OALP should specifically target recruitment efforts towards females and minorities involved in Oklahoma agriculture.
2. The OALP should reevaluate how the meeting of its objectives is approached, specifically the objectives of how the U.S. cultural systems and U.S. social systems affect agriculture in Oklahoma.
3. It is recommended that the OALP continue in its efforts to build leadership skills of participants.
4. If additional funding is available, the OALP would be wise to seriously consider adding one or more joint meetings and/or programs with various other Agricultural Leadership Programs across the United States. This may be possible with the elimination of one or more of the meeting/seminars already being conducted that may be deemed of less educational worth to participants.
5. For all practical purposes, the OALP should re-evaluate the trip taken to Kansas City, MO for its educational content and value as compared to other programs, and determine if it should be continued.
6. The OALP should make a concerted effort to address the foreseeable trends in Oklahoma agriculture concentrating first on governmental legislation and controls, and environmental issues and concerns.
7. The Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program should continue to operate, offering the opportunity for adult agriculturists in Oklahoma to study leadership.

Recommendations for Additional Research

1. As part of the program, on-going evaluations should be expanded to include pre and post measures of participants' perceptions and skills. Evaluations of all programs and seminars should be continued.

2. Further study of the first three classes of the OALP is recommended which would incorporate a more intensive look at the participants and their organizational participation.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A
**MATRIX OF SELECTED COMPONENTS OF RURAL AND AGRICULTURAL
LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS**

Matrix of Selected Components of Rural and Agricultural Leadership Programs

PROGRAM	Ag/Ag Related	General Rural	BOD/Advisor Group	State, National Seminar	International Seminar	Class Size	Program Cycle	Alumni Group	Evaluation
Michigan ALP	X		X	X	X	30	2**	X	
Montana (KEEP) Program	Currently	Inactive							
California ALP	X		X	X	X	30	1*	X	X
Washington Ag and Forestry	X		X	X	X	30	1	X	X
New Zealand Rural	X		X	X		24	1	X	
Family Community		X	X			25-100	varies		X
Nebraska LEAD	X		X	X	X	30	1	X	X
Hawaii Foundation	X		X	X	X	18	2	X	X
Illinois Foundation	X		X	X	X	30	2	X	X
Oklahoma ALP	X		X	X	X	30	2	X	
Alabama LEADERS	X		X	X	X	30	1	X	X
Arizona Project CENTRL		X	X	X		30	1	X	X
Colorado ALP	X		X	X	X	30	2	X	
Indiana ALP	X		X	X	X	30	2		
Missouri ALOT	X		X	X	X	30	2	X	
New England Regional		X	X	X		120	2		X
Arkansas LeadAR	X		X	X	X	30	1	X	X
Wisconsin Rural		X	X	X	X	30	2	X	X
Wyoming LEAD	X		X	X		18	2	X	
Empire State Food and Ag Leadership Idaho	X		X	X		30	2		
LEAD Ohio	X		X	X	X	25	1	X	
LEAD Ohio	X		X	X	X	30	2		
Ontario Advanced ALP	X		X	X	X	30	2	X	
Pennsylvania Rural RULE		X	X	X	X	25	1	X	X
Phillip Morris ALDP	X		X	X	X	25	2		
Virginia Rural		X		X	X	20-30	2		
Texas Ag Lifetime Leadership	X		X	X	X	30	2		

*1= Two-year program, with new class beginning each year **2= Two-year program, with new class beginning at conclusion

APPENDIX B

**OKLAHOMA AGRICULTURAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAM
FOLLOW-UP STUDY OF GRADUATES
QUESTIONNAIRE**

I. Background Information:Gender: Female MaleCurrent Marital Status: Single Married Separated DivorcedHas status changed since you completed OALP? (YES) (NO) Please describe: _____
_____Ethnicity: White, non Hispanic African American Native American
 Asian American Hispanic Other

Highest education completed: _____

Have you completed additional education since your participation in OALP? (YES) (NO)
If yes, please indicate how you were involved?: Completed additional college hours Completed a degree program

_____ Degree Earned _____ Major

 Other Please describe: _____

Current Occupation: _____

Has occupation changed since you completed OALP? (YES) (NO)
If yes, please describe the change(s). _____
_____**Current Residence:** Farm Rural area, not a farm Town < 2,500 City: 2,500 to 9,999 City: 10,000 to 29,999 City: 30,000 to 100,000 City > 100,000Has residence changed since your participation in OALP? (YES) (NO)
If yes, please describe the change(s). _____

II. Program Objectives:

Listed below are the objectives of the OALP. Based on your participation in the program, what is your opinion as to the **appropriateness** of each and the **extent** to which it was **accomplished** with your class. For each item, circle the number most applicable.

	HIGH 4	ABOVE AVERAGE 3	MODERATE 2	LOW 1		HIGH 4	ABOVE AVERAGE 3	MODERATE 2	LOW 1	
					<u>APPROPRIATENESS</u>					<u>EXTENT ACCOMPLISHED</u>
1. Broaden your understanding of Oklahoma's agricultural industry in relation to local problems and opportunities.	4	3	2	1		4	3	2	1	
2. Broaden your understanding of Oklahoma's agricultural industry in relation to state problems and opportunities.	4	3	2	1		4	3	2	1	
3. Broaden your understanding of Oklahoma's agricultural industry in relation to national problems and opportunities.	4	3	2	1		4	3	2	1	
4. Broaden your understanding of Oklahoma's agricultural industry in relation to international problems and opportunities.	4	3	2	1		4	3	2	1	
5. Broaden your understanding of how the U.S. economic system affects agriculture in Oklahoma.	4	3	2	1		4	3	2	1	
6. Broaden your understanding of how the U.S. political system affects agriculture in Oklahoma.	4	3	2	1		4	3	2	1	
7. Broaden your understanding of how U.S. cultural systems affect agriculture in Oklahoma.	4	3	2	1		4	3	2	1	
8. Broaden your understanding of how U.S. social systems affect agriculture in Oklahoma.	4	3	2	1		4	3	2	1	
9. Broaden your perspective on the major issues affecting agriculture.	4	3	2	1		4	3	2	1	
10. Increase your ability to analyze the complex problems affecting Oklahoma agriculture.	4	3	2	1		4	3	2	1	
11. Increase your ability to react to the complex problems affecting Oklahoma agriculture.	4	3	2	1		4	3	2	1	

IV. Leadership:

Please rate yourself on the following items prior to and following your participation in the OALP. Try to identify only those changes as a result of the program. For each item, circle the number most applicable.

HIGH 4	ABOVE AVERAGE 3	MODERATE 2	LOW 1
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	<u>BEFORE</u>				<u>AFTER</u>			
1. Your willingness to accept leadership responsibility.	4	3	2	1	4	3	2	1
2. Knowledge of your limits and strengths as a leader.	4	3	2	1	4	3	2	1
3. Your skills in solving problems.	4	3	2	1	4	3	2	1
4. Your skills in decision making.	4	3	2	1	4	3	2	1
5. Confidence in expressing your opinions in large group settings.	4	3	2	1	4	3	2	1
6. Confidence in answering questions in large group settings.	4	3	2	1	4	3	2	1
7. The amount of detail work you delegate to others.	4	3	2	1	4	3	2	1
8. The amount of authority you delegate to others.	4	3	2	1	4	3	2	1
9. The network of people you may contact for help or information.	4	3	2	1	4	3	2	1
10. The extent to which you involve others in establishing or setting goals.	4	3	2	1	4	3	2	1

V. Program Improvements:

If additional funding was available, what would you add to the OALP?

If current funding was reduced, what would you eliminate from the OALP?

What were your personal objectives for entering the program?

What do you foresee as trends in Oklahoma agriculture that should be addressed in future classes?

Would you again elect to participate in the OALP? (YES) (NO)

Have you actively promoted the OALP? (YES) (NO) Please explain.

Additional Comments or Suggestions:

Thanks!! Your help has been greatly appreciated.

Please return to:

**Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program
c/o Kelly Lee-Cooper
448 Agriculture Hall
Stillwater, Oklahoma 74078**

APPENDIX C
COVER LETTER

April , 1994

A follow-up study of the graduates of the Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program (OALP) is being conducted. The enclosed questionnaire seeks to update some of your personal demographic information and to secure your perceptions as to how participation in the leadership program affected you. Further, your recommendations for improvement of the program are sought.

Upon completion of the questionnaire, place it in the postage paid envelop also enclosed. Please try to return the questionnaire within the week. It will only take about 10 minutes of your time and your input will be considered and used in the final analysis.

Be assured that all responses will remain confidential and reported only as group data. Coding has been done for follow-up purposes only. Your anonymity is guaranteed.

Thank you in advance for your considerate attention to this project.

Sincerely,

Robert Terry, Director
Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program

Kelly Lee-Cooper
Graduate Research Assistant

Enclosures: Questionnaire
Return envelop

APPENDIX D
FOLLOW-UP POST CARD

We are attempting to conclude our research concerning graduates' perceptions of the Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program, and we need your input to increase the validity of our study.

You should have received a questionnaire packet approximately 2 weeks ago. If it has not been misplaced, please take a few minutes to complete it and return it as soon as possible. If you did not receive your packet, or if it has been misplaced, please call (405) 744-8286 or 744-8139 to request a new one.

Thank you in advance for helping to complete our research.

Sincerely,

Robert Terry, Director
Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program

Kelly Lee-Cooper
Graduate Research Assistant

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APPENDIX E

**RESPONDENTS' COMMENTS AS TO QUESTION 1 OF PROGRAM
IMPROVEMENTS**

Program Improvements

If additional funding was available, what would you add to the OALP?

CLASS I

Broaden spouse program.

More national lobbying training

Include the spouse in the classes or separate program.

Seminars by high profile people in and out of Agriculture.

Extra meeting on dealing with Environmental problems. Meeting to better help delegates understand life in larger cities in Oklahoma.

One or more sessions that include spouses other than the ones now held.

Being able to bring in more outside experts on various subjects and issues.

More speakers of national renown; add one more international trip for each class; a short one perhaps 3-5 days to Mexico - sponsor or host a gathering of OALP classes from this region of the country.

In-state travel of Oklahoma places, cities, farms to see state diversity.

More 3 day meetings and seminars.

CLASS II

More sessions dealing with political aspects of Agriculture.

It's already an excellent program. I'd probably just try a few different things and see how they worked in but nothing specific at this point.

Try to involve alumni in the current classes.

Maybe a joint national or international seminar.

None known.

Program to improve management skills.

More in-state trips - meetings at more sites.

Add more travel to other areas in U.S. Both urban and rural; more contact with legislative leaders.

CLASS III

More meetings with state political leaders. Visitation of other class members agriculture and or work settings.

More meetings around the state, viewing more of the operation in Oklahoma. Also spend more time observing state government.

Local, state, and federal leadership skills.

Farm visits.

Longer or more visits to D.C. Forget some of the department heads and stay with the legislative end. That is where we are affected the most. Involve the aides in those offices. Longer stays with international families and groups.

Additional Funding

CLASS III

More practical experience in leadership training dealing with politicians; more training in practical marketing and acquisitions.

More quality programs and activities building a strong family involvement and values.

More time spent on state and national ag affairs.

I think moving meetings around the state is a very good idea and there should be more of that.

I would like to see the group put up in farmers homes on the international trip. I know this isn't always possible, but you can't know a man's problems unless you see them first hand.

Time - spouse involvement - travel pay or per diem for big name speakers or teachers.

Trip to another states' Ag leadership program.

More farm visits to see various farms in operation; more interaction with state department of agriculture; more contact with elected officials, state and US; More time working on forming networks and working with them.

Nothing.

CLASS IV

Interaction with other state programs; Foreign programs; Political pressure to enhance our basic farm position. Computer programs overview.

Spouses should attend together if they would like. It's hard to be a successful leader of your spouse doesn't have the knowledge and understanding of what you're putting your time and efforts into - while taking away from your family.

More leadership development, management of people.

More trips in Oklahoma to examine the different facets of Agribusiness in the state.

More Ag law, and interaction with ALP from other states.

Travel to an out-of-state campus or capital.

Standing up and adequately expressing my thoughts in certain situations can be a challenge. Increasing the media training with high pressure interviews, forcing a response could be a help in building confidence.

More one on one personal development programs.

Trip to other regions of the U.S. to visit other producers in California, the Southeast, or wherever would be a good experience.

I would have more spouse involvement.

Visit another state and see the problems agriculture is having in their area. The working together of other people in agriculture to bring about one voice.

Would like to see participation with other state Ag Leadership Programs.

I don't know of anything I would add.

It would be great if the wives or spouses could be included in the trips and meetings.

Additional Funding

CLASS IV

Functions in surrounding states to look at regional concerns. Get out of Stillwater more often.

CLASS V

More International paid speakers - training.

More travel to other states to better understand their concerns. Provide one session on holistic resource management.

More educational tours and I would like to see the districts represented on a more equal basis.

I would try to have at least one joint meeting with another state. The time Class V spent in/with Texas was very beneficial. I would hope each class could have an experience like that.

To see more locations in the state of Oklahoma.

More educational trips to other agricultural regions of the United States (i.e. Pacific Northwest, Southeast, etc.)

More interaction between other ALP programs and ours.

Meet with other state leadership groups and more interaction with urbans.

More visits to places where things are done.

More political interaction and training.

Language training before international seminar; an extra week of international seminar to stay in private homes; time for another seminar where one week would be spent with leaders in U.S. Ag (live with them, go to work with them.)

I would add additional interaction with other state leadership programs so that we may develop regional friendships.

Take a trip to Houston/Gulf Port; Take a trip to California/San Joaquin Valley.

An Alumni program? Maybe more would attend if we had to apply and pay to attend alumni meetings.

Ag trip to other states.

CLASS VI

Trip to Chicago Board of Trade.

Probably another 3 day tour in Oklahoma. Then maybe a joint tour/study involving another Ag Leadership group from a neighboring state.

Working with and on computers. Do financial management work.

More printed materials pertaining to the sessions.

Try to explain the full current Farm program to the participants and then all might understand all the things that effect Ag.

Interstate meetings with surrounding state ALP classes.

Additional Funding

CLASS VI

A trip to Southwest OK (cotton farming); Tour of the Braums Dairy in Tuttle.

Try to do more to involve the spouses and family in the OALP program.

We have so many things in common with Texas and Kansas that joint meetings would be beneficial.

Get together with other similar state ALP groups.

Possibly a session with another group (Leadership Program) in a state with more public pressure, i.e. California, New York, a state with more public awareness.

I would like to see a continuation of the program after one graduates. Maybe have a couple of classes each year for the Alumni.

A trip to the midwest to tour major feed lots - packers and grain production.

Visit neighboring state associations.

The program is well rounded as it is.

More spouse involvement; Two trips to D.C.

Another trip within the U.S., say to Northwest - timber industry, or to California - vegetable production as examples.

More spouse activities.

Tours out of state to similar and non-traditional agriculture. Maybe a grape farm.

Something we know nothing about.

APPENDIX F

**RESPONDENTS' COMMENTS AS TO QUESTION 2 OF PROGRAM
IMPROVEMENTS**

Program Improvements

If current funding was reduced, what would you eliminate from the OALP?

CLASS I

Paid meals and hotels.

Though quite valuable, the international training and trip is less important than national political training.

After 10 years away from the program, I can't answer this.

National leadership seminar.

Felt we spent too much time on commodity type meetings.

Time consuming filler with no meat. Condense three day sessions to two days by cutting somewhere.

International trip.

Cut the meal and housing allowances first; but try to maintain the quality of the programs; 2 day seminars vs. 2 1/2-3 day seminars.

International travel

Some of the monthly meetings; Do not eliminate national and International trips.

CLASS II

Reduce the length of the international session.

I would first ask Milf. at the OSU foundation to work harder on finding an endowment or whatever so that funds would always be available from the investment income. I wouldn't eliminate anything yet!

Not sure. Would not eliminate urban, national or international experiences.

Classes on production agriculture.

Washington D.C.; shorten international seminar.

Shorten the three day seminars at the university.

CLASS III

The international experience was fantastic but expensive in respect to the budget. I feel if funding were reduced exchange trips with other state leadership groups would be beneficial.

Kansas City trip.

International experience.

It was all worthwhile.

Stay with the D.C. and International experiences to the end. Cut the classroom time first, not completely but shorten. Then the K.C. trip and then start shortening D.C. and International.

Technical training such as Ag Econ training.

Number of gatherings and length of each time gathering; Kansas City trip; Number per class.

Eliminate

CLASS III

International tour - the program can stand on its own without international tour.

I cannot think of anything you would be able to eliminate.

I would eliminate the trip to Kansas City. That was least informative trip for me.

Side trips on the study trips (plays, expensive meals, zoo trips, etc. would have to be paid by participant.) The Kansas City trip would probably be the next expense to be cut.

Trip to Kansas City

I would not want anything eliminated, but if cuts had to be made, I would recommend trimming the international trip - not eliminate. I will always treasure the time I spent in New Zealand, Australia, and Hawaii, but the true benefit of the leadership class was taught in Oklahoma.

Some meals (e.g. breakfast); cost share on trips to K.C., D.C. and international.

Shorten Washington trip. I'm not a politician.

CLASS IV

Shorten length; condense programs.

We had several meetings which didn't yield much knowledge - more socially inclined - I'd rather do less back-scratching and more information gathering -- and spreading.

Kansas City trip

Some of the programs that were not as interesting from previous classes.

The Kansas City trip, and shorten the trip to D.C. by 3 to 4 days.

Travel to K.C.

Its a tough choice, but it came down to it. I would have to cut the visit to Kansas City.

I think I would rather limit class size than to eliminate sections of the program.

I would shorten the international trip or take a trip to a different region in the USA.

I don't know.

The trip we took to Enid was on Ag transportation. It was the least interesting of all our sessions.

I would hate to have had any part of the program reduced.

Some of the Stillwater meetings.

Shorten the international trip.

CLASS V

K.C.

In the class I was in the Kansas City trip was probably the weakest part of the whole program.

I would cut out some of the OSU professor speeches.

Fund producers vs. ag related business or government agency candidates.

Eliminate

CLASS V

Some of the very first introductory session. I realize we need to meet and know our supporters but two days was awfully long and repetitive.

I'm not sure.

There were a couple of meetings that weren't very popular.

Kansas City.

Kansas City trip - was lots of fun but least educational considering time and money spent.

Kansas City Seminar (unless of course it should be decided that the class learn something while there)

The trip to K.C.

Stillwater meetings.

Cut Kansas City trip.

Have the group pay more or find sponsors. Eliminate meeting.

Some Stillwater seminars.

CLASS VI

Trip to Kansas City

Actually the entire course was very informative and interesting to me. To cut costs, perhaps during the International trip have members stay with families in their homes for about 1/3 of the trip.

Family session; 2 or 3 days less on International trip

Hopefully funding won't be reduced. If it were some sessions might be combined.

1-3 meetings that are mainly conference type. I would continue with the travel meetings.

Shorten the International seminar to 10 days; Eliminate the 1 1/2 day July meeting in Stillwater; Provide fewer meals on K.C., Washington D.C., and International trips. Drop some sessions in Stillwater where Extension and teachers put many students to sleep.

Before I would eliminate any program I would try to shorten the D.C. and International trips. If I had to eliminate one I would eliminate the trip to K.C.

Maybe a couple of the in-state seminars. I would not eliminate any of the out-of-state or country trips.

I will let the board of directors decide it, this question is too difficult. The program is excellent.

Tough question. I would have a hard time deciding what to cut out. Every meeting is vital to the program.

The program is well rounded as it is.

Would offer the class every four years instead of 2 or cut out some of the meetings.

Shorten some of the intra-state meetings; many were repetitious.

Eliminate

CLASS VI

Reduce the sessions in Stillwater. Academia seemed to lack relevance to real world problems - somewhat oversimplified and outdated. Or maybe it was the topics chosen, but in any case, the Stillwater sessions were weak. Also the K.C. trip could be shortened or eliminated. the Board of Trade was good, but the rest of it didn't amount to a whole lot.

The trip to Kansas City.

Kansas City, MO.

APPENDIX G
RESPONDENTS' COMMENTS AS TO QUESTION 3 PROGRAM
IMPROVEMENTS

What were your personal objectives for entering the program?

CLASS I

Broaden knowledge of problems and opportunities in agriculture.

Broaden my abilities.

To make my life and future in agriculture secure and profitable. Also to be a positive influence in policy and politics locally and statewide.

To become aware and involved with issues of Oklahoma and for Oklahoma.

At time I'd been out of school for 10 years and needed a boost. Also felt that we had all the different organizations going in different directions and this might be the one thing that would help bring all together with a common goal.

I felt I could contribute to Oklahoma Agriculture but something was missing for me to achieve this. I felt this was a giant opportunity to advance my knowledge and ability and confidence.

Broadening of my horizon of understanding of political, economic and social impacts on Oklahoma agriculture.

To learn more about leadership skills; to learn more about how agriculture related to our economy; to meet other people of similar interests from across the state and the country; to travel abroad and study other cultures.

To increase my knowledge of this state and promote Agriculture whenever possible.

Broaden horizons.

To broaden my knowledge of agriculture.

I did not really know what the program was all about.

To increase my leadership skills, and broaden my knowledge of agriculture.

CLASS II

To meet new agricultural friends; To learn of state and national policies affecting agriculture.

To become a better spokesperson for Agriculture; To become better at communicating my thoughts and ideas to other people.

To strengthen myself through the involvement and communication with other leaders in Agriculture in Oklahoma. This included both the people on the monthly programs and the other participants.

I wanted to become more comfortable in group discussion and become more active in leadership roles in Oklahoma.

Broaden knowledge. Re-enter realm of agricultural policies activity. Identify leadership abilities.

Personal improvement. I felt stuck in a rut and needed new goals.

Learn more about OK agriculture than just my area; How to adjust to changes in agriculture.

To broaden my perspective. To add to my networking abilities; To further develop my abilities.

Knew it was a great opportunity.

Personal Objectives

Class II

To see what I could see.

CLASS III

To establish more agricultural contacts within the state i.e. meet more people my age with my interests.

To learn more about the broad spectrum of agriculture.

Expand leadership skills.

Networking. Broaden my horizons. Continued education.

Knowledge and experience with a group of people I associate with every day. Also to enhance leadership skills I thought I already had. It was a new opportunity.

Reopen my eyes to the world around; reduce tunnel vision.

Broaden my understanding and perspective of the total U.S. economic marketing structure, the total international framework of trade, the political environment at the local, state and national levels. Also to grow in my own leadership skills.

Improve leadership skills and abilities required to lead, such as decision making, problem solving and group interaction.

To broaden my leadership skills and build a network of friends in Agriculture around the state.

I wanted to improve my communication skills when it came to a large group, as well as one on one. I also had a desire to know more about the world and how it affected me.

I wanted to have an impact on agriculture (programs, legislation, etc.) without running for public office or taking a paid position. This program offered the training and chance to meet the right people.

To become more aware of problems, policies and leadership styles in Oklahoma Agriculture.

More info about production agriculture to meet marketing needs of grass roots agriculturist.

To broaden my vision and exposure to all the issues that affect agriculture; to increase my awareness of those issues. For the incredible opportunity to take advantage of a network of people. To increase my abilities.

To broaden my views of agriculture products and markets.

CLASS IV

To broaden general agriculture knowledge.

To broaden my understanding of OK. agriculture as it relates to the rest of the U.S. and the world. To see the politics behind what governs ag policy.

Broaden views and ideas about Oklahoma Agriculture as well as its relation to national and international economics. To get acquainted with diverse group of Oklahoma farmers.

Personal Objectives

CLASS IV

Leadership development, Broaden my scope of understanding.

Networking and personal development.

To gain a better understanding of OK ag in relationship to the U.S. and international Ag. To build a better networking system of Ag leadership within Oklahoma.

Better understanding of International markets.

To become a better equipped and more knowledgeable agricultural leader. I looked forward to being exposed to the many, many areas of Agriculture, and to better understand the vast influences on Agriculture.

Broaden knowledge, experience, networking opportunities.

My main objective for entering the program was to see if I could qualify to participate.

To make contacts from around the state, and a better understanding of agriculture in the USA as a whole.

To become a better leader in my community and a better leader for Agriculture. To be able to give back something that was given to me.

I wanted to learn more about the Ag related industries and government. I also looked forward to meeting leaders in these areas with possible opportunities to open new doors.

Broaden my knowledge of how politics affects agriculture and my personal business.

To strengthen the leadership skills I had and to become acquainted with more of the top Ag leaders in OK.

To gain experience and confidence in speaking for ag and rural concerns.

To better serve my family and my community; increase leadership skills.

CLASS V

Personal advancement, networking.

To learn more of how to get things done, how the system really works and to improve my own skills and usefulness to organizations.

I wanted to broaden my knowledge in OK Ag and find new ways to diversify. I also wanted to learn more about ag in foreign countries.

Desire for meeting people with similar interests and background.

To learn more about the agriculture and the relationship it has with Oklahoma.

To develop my leadership skills and have more confidence in myself and my decision making ability.

To broaden my knowledge and improve my leadership skills and to become a better spokesperson for agriculture.

Learn more about Oklahoma agriculture; meet and make new friends; become more involved with my community.

To be a better leader in my community and have more confidence.

To broaden my own personal horizons; To become better prepared to serve.

To be a better person.

Personal Objectives

CLASS V

Meeting other farmers and ranchers or ag related industry people. Broadening my personal knowledge of Oklahoma Ag.

Broaden horizons, better understand political arena and process.

Broaden horizons, meet new people, discover opportunities to serve in leadership positions.

To develop my leadership skills.

Exposure to ag leaders and policy process, increasing contacts.

Gain a better understanding of how our political system works and how to work through the system for changes. Develop leadership skills and relationships with other Ag leaders across the state.

An awareness of Agriculture statewide.

Broaden horizons.

To improve my leadership skills.

CLASS VI

To broaden my knowledge of Oklahoma. U.S. and foreign politics and markets.

To gain the ability to be a better leader in our community.

To broaden my knowledge of agriculture in general and to understand agri. marketing and policies. Also to learn leadership skills.

Opportunity to acquire lifetime fellow ag friends who are in the program with me and alums of the program; To broaden my knowledge of leadership and acquire greater leadership skills.

To meet new people. Have interesting new experiences. To learn what was going on with Agriculture in Oklahoma. Also, to learn about the politics of decision making in our state.

To get a broader view of Agriculture and what effects Ag the most and what can influence those effects.

Develop a network of friends and business acquaintances. Travel on the International tour.

To further my leadership skills and also gain a better perspective of how agriculture, namely Oklahoma, is tied into the national and global economy.

Become more aware of how Ag policy works in OKC as well as in Washington D.C.

Understand more about Oklahoma Ag and how it effects our economy (State and Federal) Understand how the interaction between us, as producers, and our legislature occurs, and hopefully improve it.

Meet people and find out and discuss the problems they foresee or are having themselves in agriculture.

Gain more leadership traits, get more in touch with the outside world, and to aid in solving problems.

Personal Objectives

CLASS VI

Getting to know other people throughout the state and learn from their experiences and learn better leadership roles to help our community.

To further develop leadership skills and to develop a network of people in agriculture. Networking. Traveling abroad, Understanding Ag and its part of the whole.

Broaden my agriculture understanding.

To become a better spokesman for agriculture and to meet people who might help my operation.

Personal growth, networking, learning opportunity.

To improve my leadership skills, learn about other phases of agriculture in OK, U.S. and world, and to build a network of friends.

To be involved with quality people of like interests who were progressive in our field. Also to better myself, to "broaden my horizons."

APPENDIX H

**RESPONDENTS' COMMENTS AS TO QUESTION 4 OF PROGRAM
IMPROVEMENTS**

What do you foresee as trends in Oklahoma agriculture that should be addressed in future classes?

CLASS I

Rural economic development (schools, hospitals, industry.)

Train these people to bring Oklahoma's leadership together from all Ag organizations so that we can speak with a stronger more uniform voice.

I believe larger operations (over 1000 acres in cultivation) might explore communal ownership of expensive equipment and block marketing.

Fewer people returning to actual hands on farming; Foreign and big corporations owning land. Government control - wet lands and their classification - especially when they are not wetlands.

Values in the lives of Ag producers and their commitment to this state to move forward nationally.

How to deal with all the environmental changes. Help on what can be done to private property rights.

Average age of farmers keeps rising. Larger and larger farms with different goals.

Increasing governmental controls and constant or lower farm prices.

Corporate farming, consolidation of farms, diversification of farms, formation of marketing co-ops.

The environmental issues affecting agriculture; animal rights issues; the continuing decline of the farm population and how it is impacting rural communities - how do we revitalize them; sustainable agriculture.

Workforce reduction, Agriculture output as a declining percentage of gross state product and therefore it becoming less and less important.

Threats on individual property rights and environmental restrictions on private property.

Environmental issues.

Politics and bureaucracy.

The loss of young farmers due to financial difficulty.

CLASS II

Animal rights and animal welfare; property rights and their reduction by the federal government; the intrusion by government on individual freedom.

Water rights, diversification of production Ag as well as more emphasis on Ag related industry moving to Oklahoma - How do we attract it and how do we deal with it.

Numbers of farmers will keep decreasing; majority of people everywhere do not care or are not concerned about agriculture.

Continued diversity in agriculture products and prospect of available markets for new products. Continue education in market knowledge and financial accountability/cash flows for farms, plus more involvement by agriculture people in policy making.

Sound business procedures; financing, marketing, etc.

Oklahoma agriculture will be more business driven and less a way of life.

Trends

CLASS II

Move to larger family and corporate operations.

Would like to see more emphasis on factors outside the Ag sector that directly affect agriculture Govt. Regs., Animal rights, etc.

More foreign trade (NAFTA) More dairies and hog production in Western Oklahoma.

CLASS III

On the whole "Agriculture credit" is hard to come by. Agriculture operations are getting larger requiring more credit. What are the credit and investment opportunities? Environmental relations will be a high priority.

Home based businesses.

The need for outside income to supplement most operations. Also debt control should be addressed. Margins too small to increase debt rapidly.

Increased legislation that will stifle our industry.

New products, consumer trends, computer technology applications.

Cooperation in all phases of the agriculture industry will be very important.

The trend that most concerns me is more conservation mandates from the federal government with less funding to help pay for those same mandates.

Strict environmental laws, attacks from special interest groups, less government funding, less agricultural or rural representation in the legislature and congress. Should be addressed because with leadership, agriculture can be proactive instead of adjusting after the fact.

Less money from U.S. government to agriculture; environmental issues.

With NAFTA, we need more focus on trade with Canada, Mexico; We need more information on how to make our needs heard in Washington as our voting numbers decline. We need to be informed on Environmental issues to protect ourselves. We need to know how to get help during times of stress i.e. crop loss, low prices, high cost.

ENVIRONMENTAL ATTACKS - How agriculturist can take pro-active advancements to tell the whole story without emotion or pity party!

To educate the public about what agriculture is all about; and the need to have more effective spokespeople for agriculture.

Find ways to enhance financial programs available for young, beginning farmers.

CLASS IV

Governmental spending down on programs; private ownership rights. EPA; Corporate ownership (Lg. none Farmers) i.e. insurance companies.

Value added. We need to take OK products from start to finish in Oklahoma. Why start something (and do the hard part) and pass it down the line for some other state (or country) to reap the benefits.

Trends

CLASS IV

Ways to change trend in structure of Oklahoma farms from part time to full time farmers. Economic concerns.

Alternative forms of agriculture should be addressed. In conventional agriculture too much risk for amount invested.

Vertical integration in different industries; Corporate farming.

More fights between Urban/Rural

Through the OCA I see that the legislative process both state and national is going to more and more have a major impact on our ability to continue production agriculture practices. Fully knowing and understanding the process and being active participants will be key.

Financial resources and financial responsibilities as agriculture producers.

Top quality management, specialty crops, value added products, vertical integration, horizontal integration, no-till. Things that will bring a profit and help supplant lost revenue as support programs are gutted.

I would like more on animal rights activists, and environmental issues.

We need to be informed and act on trends in the state of Oklahoma and the world that affects agriculture in Oklahoma. Example is AFTA.

I think OALP is already doing an excellent job of doing this.

There will be more specialization in Ag in the future and each of us are going to need more information so as to adapt our businesses.

Water rights - competition between municipal and rural areas for water. Environmental concerns used to limit property owners right to use property.

Be able to speak up for agriculture especially to urban areas; and be ready for a world market. Rural agriculture is taken for granted.

CLASS V

Contracting - vertical integration.

Environmental policy - This will be ongoing in-depth issue - Battle is just beginning.

Farming as we know it cannot survive ecologically or culturally. Current levels of chemical and fertilizer use and soil erosion must stop.

Help the wheat farmers find ways to wean themselves off of the government pay roll, because I think it is bound to happen.

The environment (regulation, cost acceptance) and how to work to solve the problems instead of just digging in our heels and not being willing to change. A cooperative attitude is needed to help agriculture survive. Worried about "corporate" farming - Tyson, etc.

We all need to learn more about the political process and how it affects agriculture in Oklahoma whether we agree with it or not.

I think more diversification will be needed in the future to make a living on the farm. Alternative agriculture; Farming on a shoestring budget.

Trends

CLASS V

We need to process our own products in our own state. Also need to educate elementary students about agriculture e.g. ag in the classroom.
 Larger operations, more people involved in your operation.
 More alternative, direct mail and you-pick (from fruits and veggies to Christmas trees)
 Ever tightening financial strain, political implication and regulation.
 Environmental concerns, tax liabilities, property rights.
 Contract growing; vertical integration; environmental considerations. DEQ, EPA.
 The political voice of Ag will continue to be of increasing importance.
 Political pressures, Environmental pushes, Bio-technology, Who we are and what we need to be.
 Older farmers, thus fewer farmers.
 Increased governmental controls.

CLASS VI

More on marketing of your own product.
 The diminishing number of farmers.
 NAFTA and its impact on Oklahoma agriculture should be studied; Foreseeable agribusiness opportunities in Oklahoma. Perhaps members of these classes could be involved in Extension short courses in their area of the state.
 Average ages of farmers increasing. Environmental issues will become more concern to farmers/ranchers. Government support will become less. Net farm income will be unstable. Foreign markets will key demand for our products. consumer tastes and preferences will be influenced by "health scare."
 Alternatives - horticulture, ostrich, new crops. Finance and how it will affect farmers in the future. New trends such as vertically integrated corporate type farms.
 Try to give time and a broader perspective on diversification.
 Alternative enterprises; marketing; more political awareness.
 The stagnation of wheat as a profitable enterprise and possible alternatives.
 Environmental Issues, Economic Issues, Governmental Issues.
 We are going to need to move away from only being a producer of raw material and become a value adder.
 Some of the new EPA regulations and how to comply.
 Environmental concerns and general public awareness.
 Government control in Agriculture, show ways to get environmentalists and urban areas involved and show them what agriculture is about.
 Additional emphasis should focus on structure and working with agencies and government.
 Oklahoma politics and funding of government.
 Agriculture's declining political clout.
 Loss of government funding of Ag program and how to adapt.

Trends

Class VI

How to demonstrate the value of agriculture as a lifestyle not just a living and how to get this message across to consumers.

Fewer but larger farms. Getting young farmers started - bridging the funding gap. Decisions are being made by people outside of Agriculture on topics affecting our industry.

That we should and will become more businesslike.

APPENDIX I

**RESPONDENTS' COMMENTS ON EXPLAINING THEIR PROMOTION OF THE
OALP**

Please explain promotional efforts

CLASS I

OALP Alumni; Recruited future class members; Include in discussion with industry when topic includes need for leadership.

I have submitted 2 candidates for approval to the selection committee.

I have talked to several young people; I wasn't totally sold on the program for the amount of money not only from my pocket but the amount involved - and the return of knowledge - I was expecting more - but I hear the program has got better under Pete's leadership.

Board and fund raising and getting participants.

Best program with the finest people that I have ever been associated with.

I have solicited funding from my area as well as tried to let it be known when class enrollment was. I have encouraged high school youth to start thinking about this program for their future.

Encourage all who are eligible to apply. Explain benefits and need to those who can support program or are unaware of program.

We have "talked it up" wherever and whenever possible albeit on an informal basis; we have also participated in the Alumni program.

Wrote my recommendations for good candidates in our area - recommended the program to good candidates.

Talked to people about applying for the program.

I solicited funds, raised donations; sent money in on a regular basis; sent referrals and applications to others.

Encouraged people to enter.

CLASS II

Encouraged 2 members for later classes.

Recruited members for later classes.

Define "actively!!" Well, I've told lots of people and have called a few when you send us the new applications each time. But I'm not sure its real "active."

Not as much as I would like to.

Try to get quality applicants.

Discuss it with others, make sure people know its available.

Personal contacts, visiting with civic groups.

Gave application forms to several people; gave several presentations of foreign exchange program.

CLASS III

I have visited with local, state and national politicians on the importance of the OALP for the future of Agriculture in Oklahoma.

Please explain promotional efforts

CLASS III

Have tried to recruit new members. Have not supported OALP with money as much as I would like. Have had some hard times on the farm. Am getting back on solid ground and will support OALP more as funds will allow.

Promote OALP

Lack of funds. I do plan to help promote in the future.

I speak highly of OALP every chance I get. I gave a speech on the program at Rotary. I have stayed involved in the alumni group and always give out at least one application for each class. I would be happy to help with the program if needed.

Donations; Sell OALP to others.

Before changing vocations, I was instrumental in encouraging three acquaintances to apply. Each one has successfully completed the OALP.

Talked to young agriculture minded people and pointed out advantage of this program. I have talked to several students about entering the program and have written several letters for them.

I have spoken to several local groups about the OALP, and I talk to as many potential candidates as possible.

Encouraged several to apply for program.

Talked it up-solicited money-gave money-encouraged others to apply.

Each year I have solicited members for the next class.

I have shown slides of the international trip many times; I have recruited one member of class #5 and tried to get others.

Recruit applicants; quality of graduates to hold leadership positions.

I made contributions and encouraged people to apply.

I talked to people about joining.

CLASS IV

Word of mouth - farmers/ranchers/professional assoc./donation; Tyson/Weyerhaeuser SE Okla. trip Pete and I set up.

I've told others in our community about the program and its benefits. Some of who have since been in later classes. We've also contributed some money in the past.

Encouraged prospective participants to apply for OALP.

I have gotten people to fill out the application and apply for the class.

Recruiting.

By visiting several young OCA members on an individual basis and by providing copy for the Oklahoma Cowman magazine. 5000 copies mailed monthly with 4300 going to producer members.

Actively recruited people I feel would benefit from the program. Send money each year to support program.

I've tried to explain to people what affect it had on myself. I've encouraged other people to apply.

Please explain promotional efforts

CLASS IV

Talking with different groups and individuals.

Given money and recruited new members.

Promote OALP

Living in a small community such as I do, local farmers and business people didn't know how to contact federal state or local help for information. I have let these people know they are to come to me for the knowledge and information I have gained from the OALP.

Some - but since real life has to take so much of our time - I've not promoted it like I should. It is a very good program.

I have been interviewed by newspapers and magazines on OALP activities. I spoke to local civic groups and a group in Kansas working to form a Leadership program.

I talk about OALP all the time. It comes up all the time in my conversations.

CLASS V

Relating OALP experiences.

I have presented programs to Kiwanis and Chamber of Commerce about OALP. Have talked to many people about participating in program. Helped Pete arrange for speaker.

Gave programs on OALP and solicited potential participants.

I explain the program to people and try to recruit new participants. I tell about our international experience.

I tell people it was the greatest thing I had done in a long time. I tell them what you learn, the friendships, etc. I gave many programs when we got home from our international seminar. I'm always looking for candidates - especially women.

Talk with others about the class and encourage them to join.

I have contacted some prospects in my area and encouraged them to apply for a position in OALP.

I give talks all around my county on our international trip. So far I have spoken to over 30 different groups and organizations. Always promote OALP and encourage youth.

I have promoted OALP by encouraging others to become involved in the program.

Participated on the advisory board. Explained the program to persons that were unaware of the program. Encouraged qualified persons to participate.

Spoken to several who might be good members.

Encourage several people to apply.

Approximately 12 presentations after conclusion of program; Gave applications to approximately 4 prospects at each enrollment period since graduation. Promote participation to prospects during existing classes.

Talking personally with potential future class members, and encouraging them to make the time to participate.

Please explain promotional efforts

Class V

Talked to people about the program.

CLASS VI

Names of prospective members and for moneys to continue classes.

I've talked to many people about this great program. I've encouraged several people to join or submit an application in the future. Also, I encouraged a dairy organization to donate to this very useful and worthwhile program.

I gave several application packets out. I am sending 3 letters of recommendation.

I have encouraged several individuals to join the program. There are several young farmers in our area that should be encouraged to participate in a program such as this.

I have approached every young person I think would benefit from the program and explained it to them.

I have suggested to at least 10 people that they sign up if interested. I have had two applications sent to individuals that were interested.

I've talked with approximately five qualified people and encouraged them to apply for the program. I also promote the program in the local community.

This program is very stressful for the spouses with young children. I have tried to make sure new class members know what they are getting into.

I have been the guest speaker at Kiwanis and Lions. I discussed with both of them the program. I have discussed the program with the Chamber Ag Commerce.

Gave lecture on international trip to the State Board of Directors of Farm Bureau.

Talking to and trying to gain new participants.

Five seminars and presentations on the International tour.

Encourage new applicants.

It was a once in a lifetime experience that was very helpful. There are other young farmers in my community who could also benefit from this program.

Yes, recommended the program, to several others and agreed to speak, so far, to one civic group.

I have been encouraging producers in my community to apply for Class VII and have presented programs to two civic groups and one radio interview on behalf of OALP.

I believe OALP was good for me, although sometimes tough. I have promoted OALP to individuals who I feel could benefit greatly.

APPENDIX J

RESPONDENTS' ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

Additional Comments or Suggestions

CLASS I

“Keep the costs to participate as low as possible so that the program is available to all economic levels. These leaders are going to be sacrificing much in the way of time as it is. Set and enforce guidelines that specify a particular level of attendance to continue in the program and to go on the out-of-state trips.”

“I think the government and the wet lands need some common sense guidelines - they have 1/2 acre and less areas - on us that have been in cultivation since the land run - the ground water controls need to be watched - they blame everything on Ag. the way things are there is no reason for anybody to want to come back to the farm - all the government restrictions and penalties - and almost no profit or return on investment or labor.”

“This program probably did more to shape and change my attitudes more than anything I have been associated with. I also made many good lasting friends.”

“This is one of the best programs to come along in quite some time. It is very important to Oklahoma and to agriculture that it be continued and supported. My biggest frustration has been in our effort to motivate the alumni to become active as an alumni group and to function as other state alumni groups are. I think the future of the program certainly depends on a more active role of the alum’s with the program.”

“One of the best things I’ve ever done.”

CLASS II

“Excellent program”

“Survey results sent to graduates.”

“I would like to see the age limit (upper) raised a few years. More activities for alumni and current members to get together.”

CLASS III

“I wish that the OALP alumni group was stronger and more active. I know that this is tough due to bust schedules. Maybe there should be quarterly regional meetings and yearly alumni meetings. The alumni group needs to be a key asset for the OALP program. I would like to see more interaction between state leadership groups and state leadership alumni groups.”

Additional Comments or Suggestions

CLASS III

“I would pack as much into each days meeting as possible, i.e. start early, short breaks, evening meetings. Clearly define what each monthly meeting is to accomplish and possibly assign some home work (but not too much.) I would like to see a directory of all participants and Alumni. Dear Dr. Terry, I am pleased that you are the new director. I appreciate the time and effort that you have already given OALP. No other sector of the population needs leaders today more than agriculture and I know OALP can fill that need.”

“It was a phenonmenal experience.”

CLASS IV

“Need a session where the participants work with an interpreter - very important in international markets.”

“It was a well thought out program and well done. One of the best things I’ve ever done.”

CLASS V

“OALP is one of the best things I have ever done. Many of the sessions were more beneficial than a semester of college. I am very serious when I say that farming as we know it cannot survive. Small towns are getting smaller, old farmers are dying, the culture we grew up with is almost gone. The “unofficial” policy of getting people off the farm is a disaster. We must get back to “agri-culture” instead of blindly doing as “agri-business” would have us do. We must develop leaders that are not puppets of Agri-business.”

“Overall it’s a wonderful program. It’s something that is needed in Oklahoma Ag because the Ag population is getting smaller and we need a louder voice. I don’t think it should be for just young people, older people should be allowed in, because of their experience and knowledge. They would be an asset to the class. It could be discrimination. Some states are allowing in all age groups.”

“I would urge caution in moving away from a producer driven organization. Allowing government entities to be involved needs to be strictly limited and with this new class, closely monitored. This may be a good thing and it may not. It may prohibit the “closeness” established in other classes. But I do see some potential for good things to come from it but again I would hope this will be monitored closely! I learned more from my producer classmates than I did from any meeting.”

Additional Comments or Suggestions

Class V

“Dear Dr. Terry, As you know I had a great experience in this program. I highly recommend this program to all of my Ag related friends. I’m sure you will do a great job as the new director.”

“I feel that my experience in OALP reinforced my self-confidence and belief in myself and enabled me to make some positive changes. These changes include my change in marital status, job, and residence. All of these changes had been contemplated prior to the program, but I had taken no action. After the program, I felt able to take the steps needed to make the changes.”

CLASS VI

“I understand that the directors are used to dealing with kids. The people in OALP should be older and more of a leadership role. There ought to be a difference.”

“I certainly believe that the OALP is one of the greatest educational opportunities anyone could possibly be involved with. Especially coming from a remote part of the state, my eyes have really been opened. It would be nice if members had an opportunity to address people at farm meetings, etc. to drum up more interest and make the public more aware of OALP.”

“Excellent program. Anyone interested in the future of Agriculture in Oklahoma should be a part of such a program. I feel very privileged to have been a part of it.”

“We need fresh ideas in the OALP which I hope Dr. Terry can provide. It seems alot of the potential candidates cannot take the time necessary to complete the program. It needs to have be family programs.”

“Overall, it was a great program I’m sorry it’s over and will miss it greatly. I hope to become involved in the alumni group.”

“The introductory session is BORING, liven it up!! “The girls” It was sometimes quite difficult to be one of only 2 girls! I hesitate to promote OALP to other women - there were not enough in my class to effectively socialize like the guys did. We lost out in comparison. The bonds we made were very good - but...”

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VITA

Kelly Jean Lee-Cooper

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: FOLLOW-UP STUDY OF GRADUATES' PERCEPTIONS OF THE
OKLAHOMA AGRICULTURAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

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Professional Experience: Floral designer in a retail shop in College Station, Texas, November, 1985 to December, 1988; Graduate Teaching Assistant, Texas A & M University, September, 1984 to December, 1989; Assistant Lecturer, Texas A & M University, January, 1990 to August, 1990; Assistant Professor, Oklahoma State University-Oklahoma City, August, 1990 to July, 1992; Graduate research Assistant, Oklahoma State University, August, 1992 to July, 1994.

Professional Memberships: Phi Delta Kappa, Alpha Tau Alpha, Gamma Sigma Delta.

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
HUMAN SUBJECTS REVIEW

Date: 04-26-94

IRB#:AG-94-026

Proposal Title:FOLLOW-UP STUDY OF GRADUATES' PERCEPTIONS OF THE
OKLAHOMA AGRICULTURAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Principal Investigator(s): Dr. William Weeks, Dr. Jim Key,
Kelly Lee-Cooper

Reviewed and Processed as: Exempt

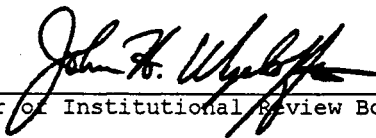
Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

APPROVAL STATUS SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY FULL INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD AT NEXT
MEETING.

APPROVAL STATUS PERIOD VALID FOR ONE CALENDAR YEAR AFTER WHICH A CONTINUATION OR
RENEWAL REQUEST IS REQUIRED TO BE SUBMITTED FOR BOARD APPROVAL. ANY
MODIFICATIONS TO APPROVED PROJECT MUST ALSO BE SUBMITTED FOR APPROVAL.

Comments, Modifications/Conditions for Approval or Reasons for
Deferral or Disapproval are as follows:

Signature:


Chair of Institutional Review Board

Date: April 26, 1994