WRITING AND EDITING PROFICIENCES IN AGRICULTURAL COMMUNICATIONS: FREQUENCY OF USE AND ROLE IN CURRICULUM

By

GINA ROSE CIUFFETELLI

Bachelor of Science

Oklahoma State University

Stillwater, Oklahoma

2002

Submitted to the Faculty of the
Graduate College of the
Oklahoma State University
in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for
the Degree of
MASTER OF SCIENCE
May, 2004

WRITING AND EDITING PROFICIENCES

IN AGRICULTURAL COMMUNICATIONS:

FREQUENCY OF USE AND ROLE IN

CURRICULUM

Thesis Approved:

Dwayne Cartmell

Thesis Adviser

James Leising

Shelly Sitton

A. Gordon Emslie

Dean of Graduate College

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ACKNOWLEGEMENTS

Life is like a box of chocolates; you never know what you're going to get.

--Forrest Gump

It seems like yesterday I was embarking on the new grand adventure of college life and today I am preparing to close the door on that chapter in my life and forage toward my next new adventure. The next unknown flavor of chocolate. I am filled with excitement that is bittersweet as I prepare to leave OSU. As a two-time alumna, I will always be a cowboy as orange fills my heart and courses my veins; I will forever be thankful for my experiences in Stillwater and the people I have come to know.

First, I would like to thank my committee members, Dr. Dwayne Cartmell, Dr. Jim Leising, and Dr. Shelly Sitton. Your guidance and support in the classroom and with this research project has helped me to learn and grow as a person. Carl Hamby, thank you for all of your help with getting the survey developed and online.

I would also like to thank Sarah Sargent, without you as my partner in crime and my very dear friend, don't think this research project would have been the same. You helped me in so many ways; thank you from the bottom of my heart.

And finally, thank you Cam. You were an endless source of support, encouragement and unconditional love. You are my best friend and your encouragement of my work on my thesis was truly a gift, I love you!

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background and Setting

Agricultural communications programs were born out of a need by land-grant universities to distribute research findings from their experiment stations to both agriculture and non-agriculture audiences through various forms of media (Evans & Bolick, 1982). In fact, the history of agricultural communications can be traced back to the early 1900s when it was referred to as agricultural journalism. The agricultural journalist became well-known for his or her unique niche for both journalism and agriculture (Duley, Jensen & O'Brien, 1984).

At the 1904 International Livestock Exposition, several livestock industry leaders emphasized the same desires as land-grant universities, in that there was a growing need for college-trained agricultural writers (Duncan, 1957). C.F. Curtis, Dean of Agriculture at Iowa State College, was very receptive to the causal idea brought up by these livestock leaders, if funding were to be available for such an endeavor (Marvin, 1946). Jon Clay, a wealthy Chicago commissioner and writer, responded to Curtis' decelerated challenge by offering up his own $1,000 as yearly contribution to create the first agricultural journalism course entitled "Agriculture Press" in 1905 (Burnett & Tucker, 1990; Nash, 1928).

After the 1904 Livestock Exposition, Iowa State College, now Iowa State University, in Ames, blazed the trail for academic agricultural journalism development.

By offering the first Agricultural Journalism course in technical journalism in the fall of 1905. By the fall of 1911, Iowa State College was offering eight classes, and by 1920, they had developed the first ever Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Journalism (Marvin, 1946). Just prior, in 1908, the first department of agricultural journalism was founded at the University of Wisconsin at Madison and offered the first course in farm news writing. From there the idea of adding agricultural journalism curriculum to academic programs spread rapidly across the nation.

By the 1990s, change and evolution motivated the agricultural journalists and most of the academic programs to shift to an agricultural communication(s) title, a better representation of the wide knowledge base of agricultural communicators, which goes far beyond just journalism (Doerfert & Cepica, 1991). Today, there are close to 30 agricultural journalism or communications degree programs (Doerfert & Cepica, 1991).

Significant growth within the country's agricultural communication's programs and the rapid changes in agriculture and communications technology call for the exploration of new curriculum to produce more capable graduates ready fill available positions in the industry (Bailey-Evans, 1994). It is these constant adjustments to both agriculture and communications that have created a need for agricultural communications faculty and professionals to determine what proficiencies are relevant in the world of the modern writer and/or editor and in turn reevaluate the current curriculum for those position(s) (Sonka, 1985; Dillman, 2000; Terry, 1994).

The curriculum in colleges and universities serves as the foundation for the development of where professional proficiencies begin to develop in the minds and the abilities of students. The curriculum is designed to help graduates gain the skills and

knowledge needed for them to be eligible for a wide-range of job opportunities available within the agricultural communications career field (Bailey-Evans, 1994). More importantly, working agricultural communicators are catalysts changes who determine technologies and tools for the future (Beck & Cilley, 1994). To successfully prepare graduates of agricultural communications, research is needed to uncover the proficiencies needed by an agricultural writer or editor of today so the industry can better communicate about agriculture in the future.

Through research we need to discover the proficiencies and curriculum needed to produce agricultural communications graduates that will succeed in professional industry and have the skills desired by employers. Proficiencies used by today's agriculture writers and editors must be identified to prevent students from going through costly training that will be professionally futile or out of date.

In-depth assessment of present day agricultural communications curriculum is a necessary for modern curricular revision and evolution (Kroupa & Evans, 1976; Larson & Hoiberg, 1987; Sledge et al., 1987; Terry, 1994). Very few evaluations of agricultural communications curriculum have been achieved, and only a few detailed studies of agricultural communications have been realized (Duncan, 1957; Nash, 1928; Evans & Bolick, 1982; Terry, 1994). Since the first curriculum was complied in 1905, little researched has been conducted to determine what proficiencies need to be included in the curriculum of agricultural communications programs.

Just as it was important in the beginning to produce an agricultural journalist who had the skills and talent to propagate the information of universities and other agricultural industries, it remains important today. The main focus as agricultural communications

evolves is in evaluating curriculum to see if programs are producing graduates who possess the proficiencies needed to be a viable member on a writing and/or editorial staff.

Statement of the Problem

There has never been an agricultural communications proficiency study that focused solely on agricultural writers and editors. Little is known about the perceived importance agriculture writers and editors place on proficiencies used within their profession. The frequency in which agricultural writers and editors use these proficiencies and how the proficiencies should be taught are two other areas that have also not been studied.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the proficiencies writing and editing professionals perceive as important, the frequency they use these proficiencies and how these proficiencies should be taught to students pursuing careers as professional writers or editors.

Objectives of the Study

To accomplish the purpose of this study, the following objectives were generated:

1. Describe the demographic characteristics of agriculture writing and editing professionals.
2. Determine important specific writing and editing proficiencies, how frequently these proficiencies are used, and how they should be taught in an undergraduate agricultural communications curriculum based on perceptions of writing and editing professionals.

3. Determine important technical agriculture proficiencies, how frequently these proficiencies are used, and how they should be taught in an undergraduate agricultural communications curriculum based on perceptions of writing and editing professionals.
4. Determine important general communications proficiencies, how frequently these proficiencies are used, and how they should be taught in an undergraduate agricultural communications curriculum based on perceptions of writing and editing professionals.

Scope of the Study

This study was a census study of agricultural writers and editors who are members of the following professional organizations: Livestock Publications Council (LPC) (n=129), American Agricultural Editors Association (n=131) and the American Horse Publications (n=127). The population included a total of 387 agricultural writers and editors. The group is representative of agricultural writers and editors in the United States. It was discovered by the researcher that a few people with in the population were members of one or more of the groups. To prevent possible inaccuracies in the data because of some respondents filling out more than one survey as the result of multiple memberships within the population, the researcher eliminated all of the duplicate e-mail addresses so each participant would only be on the list once.

Assumptions

1. The instruments used in the study provoked accurate responses from those involved in the study.
2. The participants of the study answered all of the questions to the best of their ability and supplied truthful statements.

Limitations of the Study

The author recognized the following limitations:

1. Only members of the following organizations: Livestock Publications Council (n=129), American Agricultural Editors Association (n=131) and the American Horse Publications (n=127) are able to participate in the study.
2. All of the participants may not have had Web access and/or e-mail access.

Definition of Terms

Agricultural Communications: academic program that involves a variety of communication specializations such as journalism, advertising, public relations, etc. (Bailey-Evans, 1994).

Communications: a process by which information is exchanged between individuals through a common system of symbols, signs, or behaviors (Bailey-Evans, 1994).

Disseminate: to disperse information throughout (Webster's Online Dictionary, 2003).

Editing: to prepare (as literary material) for publication or public presentation; to alter, adapt, or refine especially to bring about conformity to a standard or to suit a particular purpose (Webster's Online Dictionary, 2003).

Experiment Station: The research tier of the land-grant university system mission, the other tiers being education and extension that conducts agricultural research in the areas of life sciences, natural resources and agriculture (Duncan, 1957).

Journalism: an academic study concerned with the collection and editing of news or the management of a news medium, writing designed for publication in a newspaper or magazine, writing characterized by a direct presentation of facts or description of events without attempt at interpretation, writing designed to appeal to current popular taste or public interest (Webster's Online Dictionary, 2003).

Knowledge: the fact or condition of being aware of something, the circumstance or condition of apprehending truth or fact through reasoning (Webster's Online Dictionary, 2003).

Proficiency: identifiable skill or ability necessary for a successful performance in an occupation a student might seek after the completion of educational courses (Akers, 1992).

Non-Agriculture audience: An audience that has no connection to agriculture in any form (Terry, 1994).

Writing: to form (as characters or symbols) on a surface with an instrument (as a pen), to form (as words) by inscribing the characters or symbols of on a surface (Webster's Online Dictionary, 2003).

CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

The literature reviewed in this chapter relates to agricultural communications proficiencies and curriculum. Specific areas to be examined include Theoretical Framework, history/development Agricultural Communications Curriculum, Characteristics of Agricultural Communicators, and Professional Agricultural Communicators Opinions Concerning Curricular Requirements.

Theoretical Framework

As the world and society change, so must the way students are educated and curriculum is developed. Schuh (1986) argued the basic trial for today's land-grant university is to narrow the gap between society's problems and advancements of knowledge. Due to the vibrant diversity of the agriculture and natural resources industry, courses require assessment to meet the needs of ever changing demographics, technology, lacking resources and evolving job-related necessities. (McAlpin, 1994; Terry et al. 1994).

Curriculum builders must balance the prophecy of higher education personnel at various institutions and employers needs (Coffey, 1987). To establish realistic properties for instruction and development, program preparation should include all involved with the curriculum.

(Bjoraker, 1987; Diamond, 1989; Sledge et al., 1987; Wilkinson, 1987). It is from the experiences with curriculum and internships that proficiencies are generated to develop the student into an industry professional (Bjoraker, 1987).

In order for industry and academic professionals to make more skills-based and proficient agricultural communicators we need to get down to the root of the shortcomings of current curriculum (Bailey-Evans, 1994). Universities need to develop their programs so they produce graduates employers want to hire as writers and editors and those who are qualified and capable to take their place in the professional workplace (Sledge et al., 1987). The two worlds of trade and academics must meet and work together to continually redefine and change curriculum so students gain the proficiencies and skills needed to succeed beyond the confines of a university, and employers will be better served in knowing what proficiencies they are getting in a new graduate (Bjoraker, 1987).

Skills need to be an agricultural communicator have changed with time, expertise and occupational standards indicating an urgent need to study curricula and create more relevant material to modern industry and the needs of employers. Therefore, administrators, instructors, students, supervisors and employees should participate in evaluating and refining agricultural communications program curricula to effectively serve students and arm them with the proficiencies they need to be a success beyond college (Paulson & Metzger, 1990). It is vitally important that the needs of the industry are represented in curriculum. (Finch & Crunkilton, 1989). Erven (1987) noted supervisors are instrumental in, contributing insight into the modern competitive job market in today's society.

Background of Agricultural Journalism/Communications

By the 1900's, the agricultural journalism profession had found its niche as an extremely skilled occupation requiring writing, editing and business savvy as well as husbandry skills (Burnett & Tucker, 2001).

The founding fathers of agricultural communications were a group of plainspoken national leaders in agriculture, while also being apart of the juvenile vocation. The extraordinary accomplishments of these early leaders were their good fortune in establishing and creating an occupation a century before higher education teachings available to aid in supporting the new trade. (Tucker, 1996).

Agricultural communications can be defined broadly as a profession that applies communication techniques and theory to decisions of companies that represent food, agriculture, or natural resources (Reisner, 1990). An agricultural communicator, likewise, can be defined broadly as a person whose job requires both communicating with rural and urban audiences through various media on matters important to food, agriculture, and natural resources (Reisner, 1990).

Agricultural journalism/communications programs were designed to forge the spirit of two worlds—producing scholars who utilize the fundamentals of communications and agriculture to create graduates who are instructed to distribute agricultural reports to agricultural and non-agricultural groups.

The development of agricultural communications programs began at the university level and its establishment coincided with the outgrowth of the extension function in the first decades of the twentieth century (Duley, Jensen, & O'Brien, 1984). According to many researchers, agricultural communications or agricultural journalism

came from the need to spread the extension investigation findings to agriculturally related audiences. Agricultural journalists were required to have a specific knowledge of both agriculture and journalism, skills unique to the profession (Terry et al., 1994). This led to the development of educational programs by various universities to prepare and produce agricultural journalists.

The need to take a hands-on approach to informing the public about the importance of agriculture and their dependence on it has never been more essential. Creating awareness and correct perceptions of agriculture will take organized, concentrated efforts by educators, commodity groups and government agencies. There is a great need for people who are knowledgeable of the science of agriculture and who possess the skills to effectively communicate agricultural topics to the general public.

According to Evans and Salcedo (1974), a chief event that encouraged rivalry in the communications marketplace was the establishment of fresh types of media for news and entertainment, including cinema and radio in the 1920's (Evans & Salcedo, 1974). While picture shows did not battle directly with farm publications for subject matter, they were accepted and did contend for spectator share and money. Likewise, radio also transformed newscasts and entertainment for Americans during this period, but was not viewed by the farm publications industry as a menace to its prosperity (Evans & Salcedo, 1974).

History/Development of Agricultural Communications curriculum

The agricultural communications curriculum has been evolving since its inception in the early 1900's. Agricultural communications programs must be reexamined periodically to reevaluate the efficiency and determine if the curriculum is still viable in

producing the type of agricultural communicator the industry expects (Coffey, 1987). Reisner (1990) reported a lot of variety within the structure of curriculum across the thirty nationally known agricultural communications programs. In fact, the art of evaluation has been a role practiced in agricultural communications; the first 25 years were seriously focused on curricular progression or development.

The North Central Region Deans and Directors Resident Instruction Curricular Committee has curricular redevelopment as a necessity for all agricultural programs adding, "We do not question whether our curricula should be revised and revitalized; we accept as given that they should be" (Wharton, 1987, p. 119). In 1987, The North Central Region Deans and Directors Resident Instruction Curricular Committee reviewed the curricula of the North Central Colleges of Agriculture revealing the weaknesses they found. The report found the curriculum to have several major limitations such as: inadequate oral and written preparation of students; inadequate business skills; cross-cultural falls short in the analysis of agriculture; inadequate values and ethics in agriculture; and problem solving, leadership and public policy (Barrick, 1995).

This is an example of many works of literature serving as an outcry across the academic and professional industries for improvement. The universities and colleges want to place their graduates, and the employers want proficient new hires that require minimal on-the-job training to write and edit publications post-graduation. To meet both demands, the curricula will have to become more effective and modern (Barrick, 1995). Curriculum for agricultural communications programs is designed to create graduates with skills to perform a wide variety of career opportunities. (Evans & Bolick, 1982).

According to Duncan (1957), Iowa State College in Ames, Iowa, was the first to institute agricultural journalism curriculum in 1905. This was the result of a group of agricultural leaders gathered around the fireplace at the Stockyards Inn during the 1904 International Livestock Exposition. The consensus of the meeting was expressed as a need for agriculturally trained writers. Marvin (1946) reported that C.F. Curtis, Dean of Agriculture at Iowa State College, who attended this meeting, was very receptive to the idea if funds would be made available for courses to be developed. Burnett and Tucker (1990) noted that in response to Curtis' enthusiasm and entrepreneurial spirit during the meeting, John Clay, a Chicago livestock commissioner and an avid writer, offered the college an annual endowment of $1000 to fund a course titled "The Agricultural Press" in 1905.

Marvin (1946) reported on May 30, 1905, a group of friends and editors met on the Iowa State College campus to follow through with the plans discussed at the meeting in the Stockyard Inn. The initial agricultural journalism course offered in the fall of 1905 was taught by Will H. Ogilvie, editor for the Iowa Agricultural Experiment Station.

By 1911, Iowa State College presented eight agricultural classes. One of these eight courses was a class in home economics as a result of the high demand from female students. By 1930, a Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Journalism was offered (Marvin, 1946).

According to Marvin (1946), John Clay continued his contributions toward instruction in agricultural journalism at Iowa State College until the 1920's when he endowed a research fellowship in the form of a $7,000 grant.

Burnett and Tucker (1980) noted that in 1908, The University of Wisconsin-Madison became the first university to establish a department of agricultural journalism. J. Clyde Marquis was appointed agricultural instructor, and one of the first courses offered was Farm News Writing. Marquis joined the staff of the Country Gentlemen magazine in 1911 and later became the U.S. Representative at the International Institute of Agriculture in Rome. Dallas S. Burch was the first to receive a bachelor's degree in agricultural journalism in 1908. Burch had a very successful career with the United States Department of Agriculture.

Despite an increase in enrollment, many journalism schools phased-out agricultural journalism course offerings to encourage other curricular pursuits. Several Midwest colleges answered the need by assuming the responsibility of agricultural journalism at their institutions. Due to the lack of assets and other resources, early programs had a narrow range. Students were primarily male, often seeking an eclectic blend of curriculum including agriculture, journalism and science.

Other pioneers of agricultural journalism were Charles Ross and Nelson Crawford. Ross, who taught the first course in agricultural journalism at the University of Missouri in 1909, later served as press secretary for President Harry S. Truman. Crawford, who was president of Agricultural Communicators in Education (ACE) in 1917 wrote the first college text on journalistic ethics and was the first director of information for the USDA (Burnett & Tucker, 1990; Bailey-Evans, 1994).

There was quick growth from 1908-1928 in the number of colleges or universities that offered courses in agricultural journalism. By 1928, seven colleges offered eleven courses under the category of "Trade and Technical Journalism." Examples of the

courses being offered included: “Agricultural Journalism”, “Agricultural Writing,” “Agricultural Editing,” “The Agricultural Press,” and “Agricultural Research and Seminar” (Nash, 1928, p.28).

After initial growth, there was slowed growth in agricultural journalism programs until the 1960’s. Duley, Jensen and O’Brien (1984) noted that half of the programs functioning in 1984 had been started after 1961. These researchers found that 38.5 percent of new programs used agricultural communications as their program title and were established between 1960 and 1979. The majority of programs developed prior to 1960 were identified as agricultural journalism programs.

According to Bailey-Evans (1994), agricultural communications programs before 1960 were narrowly defined in journalistic terms. An example of this is the agricultural journalism program at Kansas State University. This program was developed out of the Industrial Journalism program, which spawned the current School of Journalism and Mass Communications. In the early years, students majored in agricultural journalism to seek a career in the print news field.

Terry et al. (1994) indicated that today’s agricultural communications programs are well established. Most of the programs in the 1990’s were identified with the term communication(s) rather than journalism (Doerfert & Cepica, 1991). Doerfert and Cepica reported there were approximately 30 agricultural communications programs in existence in 1990, and more than 75 percent were housed in the college of agriculture and related fields.

Characteristics of Professional Agricultural Communicators

"Jobs in agricultural communications offer excitement, adventure and the opportunity to keep up-to-the-minute on the latest in every field of agriculture today" (National Project in Agricultural Communications, 1955, p. 19). Though this promotional declaration was created half a century ago, many would confirm it still applies to contemporary agricultural communications.

As noted earlier, an agricultural communicator can be defined broadly as a person whose job requires communicating to both urban and rural industries via a variety of communication venues on matters of importance to food, agriculture, and natural resources (Doerfert & Cepica, 1991).

There has been an ever-growing trend for research about agricultural communicators. Buck and Paulson (1995) revealed demographic information about agricultural communicators including the following: most agricultural communicators are either a Caucasian male or female, age 35 to 44, grew up on a farm, and live in a small city of 10,000 or more people. Every profession has to be knowledgeable and carry out the activities that separate it from other professions (Dohney, Cook and Stopper, 1992).

It seems professional organizations have been a catalyst for agricultural communications growth and development. The literature written about the agricultural communicatoions professional organizations states they serve as networks for other professionals, a knowledge base for new skills and techniques, and provide opportunities for scholarly publishing and speaking (Kearl, 1987).

In modern times, college curriculum in agricultural communications continued to serve an important role in developing professionals for a diversification of

communications professions in both private and public sectors. A call for highly qualified professionals who are schooled to respond to controversial and intricate issues such as environmental conservation, food safety, and genetic modification of plants and animals (Burnett & Tucker, 2001). Because of all the aspects of agricultural communications, courses also incorporate general education concepts into undergraduate curriculum, such as multicultural awareness, media literacy, and critical thinking skills (Burnett & Tucker, 2001).

Professional agricultural communicators agree an agricultural communicator is not an agriculturalist primarily, but communicators who have a specialty. Practitioners' emphasized students need to build firm communication skills so they will have expertise in an array of areas with emphasis on in-depth communication courses that would help prepare students.

Every profession has knowledge and carries out activities that separate it from other professions (Coheny, Cook, and Stopper, 1992). Professional organizations are valuable to the growth and welfare of any profession and thus serve as a catalyst for professional growth and development of members. In addition, the membership and participation of individuals in organizations contribute directly to growth and collective expertise within the profession itself (Buck & Paulson, 1995).

Ultimately, the caliber of professional organizations can be measured, in part, by the member characteristics, education preparation, and practices of the collective membership. Therefore, the quality of the membership becomes a concern as a professional identity is created in each profession (Buck & Paulson, 1995).

For instance, the position of agricultural communicator is not new to the list of agriculturally related occupations. However, there are no set guidelines regarding the agricultural communicator's purpose in disseminating information about agriculture (Weckman et al., 2000). The responsibilities of an agricultural communicator are complex, and they vary according to the type of employment, the educational preparation of the individual, and the range of his or her experiences and special interests. Therefore, it is necessary to develop a profile that gives special attention to these characteristics of current agricultural communicators, before their perceptions and opinions can be used effectively for curriculum evaluation and professional development (Burnett & Tucker, 2001). Agricultural communications is a profession that has been around for more than 100 years.

It remains the agricultural communicators' duty to determine what information about agriculture is needed for each audience and then develop ways to present the information (Evans, 1984). This requires involvement in all stages of the communication process, and the type of skills needed varies greatly.

Curriculum/Competency Studies Related to Agricultural Communications

In the early 1990's, a group of researchers developed a discipline competency-based curriculum for university agricultural communications programs nationwide (Terry et al., 1994). This was the first formal assessment of its kind since 1905 when the first agricultural journalism curriculum was established (Bailey-Evans, 1994). The authors listed a set of disciplines and competencies that received 70% agreement rating (from employers, students and university faculty) and recommended these be used by

universities to develop or enhance their agricultural communications curriculum. The researchers stated this represented a "model" curriculum that met the needs of employers, employees, educators, and students.

Mitchell (1956) said there was no consensus among employers of agricultural journalists and communicators about the best educational background for this career. Mitchell (1956) found a serious lack of agreement among professionals about the kind of education needed for a career in agricultural journalism and communications. He did note employees of agricultural journalists and communicators placed greatest emphasis on formal education in agriculture; whereas, employers emphasized education in journalism and communication. Both Mitchell (1956) and Clyde Duncan (cited in Evans and Bolick, 1982) found that professionals recommend more coursework in agriculture than in journalism and other areas.

Kroupa and Evans (1973) produced a study to present the new directions in agricultural communications curricula. They determined diversity was a major theme, both in the interest and activities of the professional agricultural communicator. They also found new media, new techniques, and audiences inevitably broaden and shift professional requirements. The researchers presented an argument that flexibility in curricula be the focus in refining programs. Those who work with curricula should determine core curricula such as communications skills, human relation, and agriculture orientation, while still allowing students to mix and match communications and/or agriculture courses to produce a degree plan that best suits his or her career plans. The researchers feel course work should be required, but the student should choose the specific course subject matter.

Reisner's (1990) review of several agricultural communication curriculum surveys revealed beliefs opposite to the findings of Mitchell (1956) and Duncan (cited in Evans and Bolick, 1982). Reisner (1990) reported professionals agreed courses in communication skills, communication systems, or human relations were more important than agricultural communication systems and agricultural subject matter courses. However, Reisner (1990) did find, like Mitchell (1956), that employers of agricultural communicators consider expertise in both mass communications and agriculture helpful.

A study by Bailey-Evans (1994) concluded that the following communications disciplines included the core agricultural communications curriculum: advertising, journalism, photography, public relations, public speaking, and telecommunications. Bailey-Evans (1994) found the following agriculture disciplines should be included: agricultural communications, agricultural economics, agricultural leadership, agronomy, animal science, environmental science, and food science technology. According to Bailey-Evans (1994), the agricultural communications curriculum should also include business, marketing, computer applications, internship experiences, and international relations.

Tucker and Paulson (1989) found agricultural communications students wanted to stay in agriculture after graduation. Most students noted a need to encourage agriculture and work with agriculturalists. Rudd and Sprecker (1998), however, found students with specialized interests within agricultural communications faced a shortage of job opportunities and job contacts are needed to secure employment.

Bowen and Cooper's 1989 study was very similar to the Sprecker (1996) study in that they wanted to determine the perceptions of graduates from their own school, The

Ohio State University, about their existing agricultural communications curriculum. The researchers found recent graduates perceived courses in journalism and communications more crucial than agriculture or general education courses.

Boone (1991) discovered communication skills ranked more important than technical skills and knowledge of agriculture; her finding paralleled those of Kroupa and Evans (1976) who noted, "the modest emphasis that many professionals placed upon agricultural coursework may be surprising to those who are accustom to agricultural journalism/communications curricula geared mainly to editorial work in print media directed toward an agricultural audience."

Rudd and Sprecker (1998) found well-rounded communications expertise reaffirmed the belief that journalism/communications courses are more important than agriculture or general education knowledge (Bowen & Cooper, 1989).

Sprecker (1996) conducted a study in Florida using the opinions of alumni, instructors, and practitioners concerning curricular requirements of agricultural communications students at the University of Florida. Sprecker found the curriculum at the University of Florida was too broad and recommended a course be developed to give a brief introduction to the varied areas of communications. She recommended different areas including: advertising, public relations, electronic media, and policy. Sprecker also recommended in her study that agricultural communications students be able to "specialize" and take more in-depth courses.

Based on their findings, Terry et al. (1994) and Bailey-Evans (1994) acknowledged today's agricultural communicators have exceptional outstanding written communication skills. They are proficient in operating microcomputers to accomplish a

variety of tasks including word processing, graphical design, desktop publishing, management and networking. They noted the importance of internship experiences as an important and valuable part of hands-on training to become an agricultural communications professional. Business knowledge, including agricultural economics and marketing, was an important area of needed knowledge as well (Terry et al., 1994; Bailey-Evans, 1994).

Overall, the broad variations in the perceptions of agricultural communicators can be seen most readily in the wide ranges of types of careers for agricultural communicators and their levels of education (Weckman, Quinn and Witham, 1992). Usually agricultural communications students have degrees that require a combination of agriculture courses and journalism or communication courses, as well as other courses to support their career goals (Evans and Bolick, 1982)

Curriculum

Wiles and Bondi (1998) defined curriculum as a specialized area of study, which emerged from a growing need to organize and rationalize the changing forms of American education.

As society began to accept colleges, it was discovered they were founded on very simple and primitive teachings. Limited conventional subjects were the core of early curricula. It wasn't until later when new academic areas were added to establish more evolved coursework and degree programs. Byproducts of curriculum evolution were the faculty who became well versed in the new academic areas (Smith & Clements, 1984).

It is now common for colleges and universities to offer various types of academic degree. They are still hindered, however, when it comes to adapting much needed

curricular advancements. Reasons for the lack of change in academics include a lack of funding, a narrow scope to change and insufficient resources. It is for these reasons that higher education fights to meet the demands of transforming industries. (Lunde, 1995).

Curriculum development

To make needed changes to curriculum institutions must first identify what students need and how. The next question is how to implement the needed changes (Reid, 1999). According to Wiles and Bondi (1998), curriculum reconstruction comes from the answers to a set of questions based on the preferences that will pilot the planning and evaluation of undergraduate programs. The planners are focused on designing programs with the principles and ease of design to create a useful curriculum.

The significant problem for curriculum designers is "Does the program serve the developed intentions?" (Wiles & Bondi, 1998). Modifications in curriculum must mirror those in the society to justify a place on the required skills set to be mastered by students to be successful in industry (Lunde, 1995).

Employers are extremely beneficial in the analysis of the industry in which new graduates will take their new positions. Their input can directly correlate to needed curricular changes and evolution and help to identify the skills needed in the future of an industry (Erven, 1987).

Reasons for Curriculum review

As expertise progresses, humanity changes, and trends emerge, so must curriculum. According to Bridwell, Bretz, DeViries and White (1996), students' needs are evolving because today's world is globally mobile. To better assist these alterations in

today's civilization, we must develop techniques to become more flexible and portable. Martin (1995) noted as students change, then so must the courses which schools offer in their curriculum.

Recent changes in the fields of agriculture and communications have created a need for agricultural communications faculty to reexamine their curricula (Souka, 1985; Dillman, 1990). Since the 1950's, large scale curriculum reforms have been introduced in most educational systems worldwide (Souka, 1985). Curriculum reform is appropriate and necessary at all educational levels (Sprecker, 1996).

Academic programs should periodically be reviewed and evaluated to review educational objectives (The Carnegie Foundation for Advancement of Teaching, 1978). In a national study of universities reviewing agricultural communications curricula, it was recommended course offerings in agricultural communications be regularly reviewed and modernized to reveal the technological innovation of the current day and those yet to be created (Bailey-Evans, 1994).

Curricular planners need to answer such questions as "What will the world be like in the future?" and "What characteristics will our graduates need to be successful?" (Sledge et al., 1987, p.119). According to Sprecker (1996), keeping the curriculum up-to-date is as important today as it has ever been. If agricultural communications programs are going to survive, they must be able to adjust to new situations and environments that help on-the job effectiveness of future graduates (Souka, 1985).

Kroupa and Evans (1984) wanted to find some reliable method of determining which courses students should take as they prepare for various communications jobs. And, the authors wanted to specifically be able to recommend courses by subject area or

catalog description. Additionally, Kroupa and Evans (1984) wanted observations or general comments from industry people on what was good, bad or indifferent about their preparation for a particular communications jobs. In short, they wanted feedback from agricultural communicators on what they think curricula should be and how it should be presented to future communicators (Kroupa & Evans, 1984).

Just as the skills to become an agricultural communicator have changed, so have the competencies (Sprecker & Rudd, 1998). Buck and Paulson's (1995) study revealed a need for identifying the type of education best suited for an agricultural communicator. Although there have been several studies to determine curriculum/competency needs for university students enrolled in agricultural communications programs (Terry et. al., 1994; Sprecker & Rudd, 1998), a review of research indicates there has never been a national study to determine competencies and overall curricular needs for those specifically seeking careers as writers and/or editors
(Akers, 1992). According to Reisner (1990), it is vital that agricultural communications programs and curricula receive regular examination. Bailey-Evans (1994) acknowledged the agricultural communications curriculum should be continually expanded and updated to reflect the technological advancements of today and the future.

Sprecker (1998) found agriculture communicator competencies progress with scientific research and technological advancement to meet vocation requirements and suggest an analysis of current programs. Terry et al. (1994) claimed scientific discovery and individualization within and in the industries of science, natural resources, agriculture and food science have created the demand for information dissemination. Continual surveying of agricultural communication professionals must be done to access

the skills and needs for a career in the industry, and the curriculum should be adjusted to support those findings. (Sprecker, 1998).

Agricultural Communicators' Opinions Concerning Curricular Review

As time changes, so must agricultural communications curriculum; a widely held view among most agricultural communication alumni; how the changes need to be made and what needs to be changed are what is debatable within that same group. Schuh (1986) maintained it was a basic challenge of the modern land-grant university to bridge the gap between society's problems and the frontiers of knowledge. Curricula needs to go along with modern trends in demographics, technology, information and vocational needs (McAlpin, 1994; Sprecker & Rudd, 1998; Terry et al., 1994).

The proficiencies and skills the modern agricultural communicator must possess to be effective in their job must change as well. Curriculum developers must focus on their varied audiences when planning toward the future, keeping a balance of the academic faculty's vision, the goals of the students and the needs of the employers (Coffey, 1987).

Many professional agricultural communicators feel they left their university not armed with all of the skills and proficiencies expected of them by their new employer (Coffey, 1987). While the range on specific proficiencies and skills vary from graduate to graduate, the most common weaknesses include lack of business procedures, understanding of current events reporting, importance of public speaking and interviewing skills, international trade/economics, technical agriculture, crisis management, and interpersonal networking (Sprecker & Rudd, 1998).

Practitioners overwhelmingly agreed they were most prepared for writing. Writing was identified as being one of the leading skills of required in communications and was the most valuable skill learned through their degree program. Reisner (1990) discovered writing was the most fundamental offering among the core courses for agriculture communications. Reisner also discovered a variety of writing skills such as speech writing, feature writing and news writing needs to be taught in advanced and specialized formats.

Who should be involved in curricular review?

For realistic instructional development priorities to take place, program development and curriculum planning needs to involve all who are direct reflections of those most affected by the end product of agricultural communications programs…the professionals who are out in the industry. Finch and Crunkilton (1989) indicated the importance of curriculum reflecting the desires of the industry. Evans (1975) contends the surge in agricultural technology must be mirrored by advancement of curriculum to represent workforce requirements in an evolving industry.

In a professional field swiftly increasing and altering, occupational approval may symbolize a dimension of program success that can offer information about how to proceed with the academic requirements in this area of study, as well as imply how to meet expectations in the field and the direction for future program development and curriculum (Asker, 1992).

Curricula change is often influenced by input from current and future employers. Input from employers produces a pattern that can be used as a model to modify and upgrade the curricula. According to Erpelding and Mugler (1987), educators must

broaden their approach to provide competence rather than mere knowledge and to stimulate occupational and civic effectiveness, not just analytical capability.

Course curriculum planning are decisions that demand pledging ample time, energy and should not be taken casually. The decision to create a course curriculum should not be taken lightly since it will require committing a great deal of time and effort (Diamond, 1989). The assessment and review needed before any realistic, innovative change in curricula is accomplished must start with the examination of the strengths and weaknesses of the current curricular design (Larson & Holiberg, 1987).

According to Krueger (1988), any revisions in curriculum should start with a thorough overview of the needs of the targeted clientele group (i.e. future employers, professionals, etc.). For realistic instructional development priorities to occur, the development process should involve contributions from all affected by the curriculum (Diamond, 1989; Sledge et al., 1987).

Leaders in business and industry are valuable sources of information on the skills and knowledge needed for graduates to successfully enter a career; they can provide information on educational experiences necessary for satisfying life in the cultural setting and society (Sprecker, 1996). The agricultural industry represents the consumer or the benefactor of curricular reform. Industry is a valuable resource for critical input and for measuring the quality of the academic program (Bjoraker, 1987; Wilkinson, 1987).

Whether curriculum is just being formulated or undergoing revision, it is fundamentaly imperative to guarantee its subjects indicate the wants of the industry. (Finch & Crunkilton, 1989). According to Sprecker (1996), the frustrating aspect of determining curriculum content lies in identifying that which truly is relevant to both

academic and occupational settings. She adds that for many students, integration of education and industry doesn't really begin until after graduation.

Agricultural Communications and Accreditation

Since the early 1900's when agricultural communications first emerged as an occupational area of higher education, its practitioners have struggled for recognition as professionals both within and outside of the academic world. While significant progress has been made, many agricultural communicators continue to believe the field has not yet achieved the professional recognition it deserves (Tucker, Whaley, Whiting & Cano 2003).

These agricultural communicators often must navigate between two worlds…the academic world in which quality of research and teaching is the major criteria governing promotion and tenure, and the practitioner world in which applied communications skills are valued most highly (Boone, et al., 2000).

Seeking a balance between academic and applied communicators is a challenge for both individual faculty members and the teaching program and curricula they administer. Agricultural communications curriculum development is complex because of the widely different world views held by the various stakeholders (Tucker, Whaley, Whiting & Cano, 2003). For instance, employers and students tend to place the highest value on applied skills needed in the work place, while academicians place a higher premium on graduate-level course work and research.

One reason for competing stakeholder influences on agricultural communications academic programs is that the programs vary widely in scope and description (Reisner,

1990; Doerfert & Cepica, 1991). Such diversity in programs has led to some calls for curriculum reform and quality control of academic programs. In 1993, a national summit in Kansas City for faculty and professionals involved in agricultural communications and journalism addressed the problems of the field. A committee was charged to develop mission and vision statements with the idea that it would provide more direction and consistency for individual academic programs (Tucker, Whaley, Whiting & Cano, 2003).

Increasing professionalism among agricultural communicators has been an important topic in agricultural communications for some time. Creating policies to proliferate and acknowledge this focused discipline of importance to many agricultural communications professionals as well as those who are concerned with overseeing scholastic curriculum. To bolster respect and seek the establishment of accreditation certification and principles that would permit for qualifications of academic programs. Advantages for accreditation improve consistency of programs and development of value instruments (Tucker, Whaley, Whiting & Cano, 2003).

However, to be implemented correctly and successfully there needs to be more information on an all-inclusive method, how the quality control is being utilized in other areas and what elements should be pondered for use in agricultural communications. Most recent calls have been for the possible development of the accreditation process for agricultural communications to help define and ensure quality of inidividaul programs. Research conducted by Weckman et al. (2000) revealed that more than half of current agricultural communications programs supported the development of a national accreditation program.

Some argue accreditation could help to enhance recognition and prestige of programs not only among industry professionals, but also among other faculty and administrators at home institutions, which could help to justify additional resources and faculty. The other side of the issue is that many haven't considered the feasibility or challenges of implementing such as process (Tucker, Whaley, Whiting & Cano, 2003).

Agricultural Communications and Agricultural Education

Duley, Jensen and O'Brien (1984) discovered that many communications programs originated courses through departments of agricultural education. According to Lockaby and Vernon (1998), this happened because students planning to teach must have a breadth of understanding about the complex agricultural industry. These students need to have the ability to "communicate" or "educate" this information to others. Lockaby and Vernon (1998) continue by saying an effective partnership had developed between agricultural communications and agricultural education and they are quickly becoming central elements of each other. They add that this partnership is not only making agricultural education and agricultural communications stronger; but it will also continue to do so in the future.

Lockaby and Vernon's (1998) contention is supported by recent changes at universities that have seen agricultural communications programs joining departments of agricultural education. Many of the larger undergraduate agricultural communications programs at universities—including those at Oklahoma State University, Texas A&M University, Texas Tech University, California Polytechnical University at San Luis Obispo, and the University of Florida-Gainesville—are all housed in departments that contain the name Agricultural Education & Communications (Akers, 1992).

Agricultural Education has always considered communications a valued component of their curriculum. According to Birkenholz and Craven (1996), agricultural education programs have historically helped students develop and polish communication skills through public speaking, writing, and leadership activities.

Web-based surveys

Dillman stated random sampling, electronic and telephone surveys are the most innovative tools of analysis in the twentieth century (Dillman, 2000). The influence of made by telephone and random sampling, one can only imagine the future of Web-based surveys.

A Web-based survey is a set of figures from an electronic group of questions self administered on the web. The researcher has control of the cosmetic look of the survey and can create appealing and alluring appearance. The surveys can include drop-down lists that allow only one response, and check boxes, which allow multiple responses. Content boxes can allow for a limited number of characters or an unlimited text entry depending on the needs of the researcher.

To productively execute web surveys, industry specialists typically taken from population samples including faculty, employees, professional memberships and employers that contain information including email addresses. Dillman (2000) argued regardless of narrow scope, electronic web surveys submit clear benefits verses conventional postal analysis within the given populations.

Not only did Dillman (2000) note web-based surveys to be more economical, but also faster although the response rates were usually lower than traditional mail surveys. Web-based surveys also were found to entail more time and technological know-how, but

no postage was required. He determined there was a more constructive view toward technology and efficiency with primary respondents then those with early mail survey respondents.

Summary of Literature Review

An evaluation and change of current curricula are needed to produce graduates who are more proficient, skilled, and suitable for working in the professional world. This needs to be a collaborative effort of collegiate administrators, teachers, students, industry professionals and employers because they all have something to be gained by the improvements made to curriculum, and it can lead to positive results. The academic professionals would have better placement and acceptance of their graduates the practitioners would have a hand in refining the programs they graduated from employers would get graduates more suitable to work in their businesses, and students would be more apt to obtain good job placement.

Sprecker and Rudd (1998) stated not only will the reconstruction and evolution in agricultural communications curriculum produce more skilled and competent graduates, but also should prove to be a positive change for all that are involved. These changes may also prove to be a good recruitment tool for attracting potential students to enter the profession of agricultural communications because of the efficient training and job placement possibilities.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the methods and procedures used to conduct this study, including measures of data collection and analysis. The specified population, survey instruments, data collection, and analysis procedures were developed to address and explain the purpose and objectives of the study. Each of these factors is represented in chapter three.

Institutional Review Board

Federal regulations and Oklahoma State University policy require a review and approval of research that involves human subjects before investigators can begin any research. The review is conducted by the Oklahoma State University Office of University Research under the direction of the Institutional Review Board to protect the rights and welfare of human participants engaged in biomedical and behavioral research. To comply with this policy mentioned above, this study received proper review and was assigned the application number AG042 by the Institutional Review Board, gaining permission to move forward with the study (Appendix A).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the proficiencies writing and editing professionals perceive as important, the frequency they use these proficiencies, and how

these proficiencies should be taught to students pursuing careers as professional writers or editors.

Objectives of the Study

To accomplish the purpose of this study, the following objectives were generated:

1. Describe the demographic characteristics of agriculture writing, and editing professionals.
2. Determine important specific writing and editing proficiencies, how frequently these proficiencies are used, and how they should be taught in an undergraduate agricultural communications curriculum based on perceptions of writing and editing professionals.
3. Determine important technical agriculture proficiencies, how frequently these proficiencies are used, and how they should be taught in an undergraduate agricultural communications curriculum based on perceptions of writing and editing professionals.
4. Determine important general communications proficiencies, how frequently these proficiencies are used, and how they should be taught in an undergraduate agricultural communications curriculum based on perceptions of writing and editing professionals.

Population

The population for this study consisted of professional agricultural writers and editors who are members of the following professional organizations: Livestock Publications Council (n=129), American Agricultural Editors Association (n=131) and

the American Horse Publications (n=127). The entire population for this study consisted of 387 agricultural writers and editors.

Research Design

A descriptive survey of a population was used as the design for this study (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001). Descriptive research was selected as the research design given that perceptions of professional agricultural writers and editors are to be examined. Leedy and Ormrod (2001) asserted that descriptive research examines situations as they are and the researcher has no control over what things are, only measures what currently exists. It goes beyond the gathering and calculating of data; it uses interpretations of the meaning of data. Ary, Jacobs, and Razavieh (2001) added that descriptive research involves description not manipulation of variables. Since a census of the population was conducted, descriptive statistics were employed. Situations are not altered or changed while under investigation, and cause-and-effect relationships are not established. Characteristics of an observed phenomenon are identified, and correlations may possibly be explored (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001).

A descriptive survey allows an illustration of the proficiencies a recent graduate of an agricultural communications program should possess, as perceived by professional agricultural writers and editors, and how these proficiencies should be taught and integrated into current curriculum. This study also explores the general demographic characteristics of this population of professional agricultural writers and editors.

Instrumentation

Three surveys were developed for this study using proficiency lists from the Terry et. al (1994). The instruments asked the writing and editing professionals were also asked

to indicate how often they used each of the proficiencies: never, daily, weekly, monthly, or annually. Next, portion of the survey asked the writing and editing professionals to indicate how the proficiency should be included in university curricula: required, elective, workshop, internship, or not at all.

Due to the extreme length of the survey(s) and the researcher's desire to expose all respondents to the three focus areas in the study, a partial matrix sampling technique was used. The matrix sampling method is commonly used to manage the length of the instrument and the time required of participants (Ary, Jacobs and Razavieh, 2001).

The third and final section was a more comprehensive version of one of the three subject areas (see above list). Participants were randomly sent one of the three surveys (Appendix B).

Demographics Section

The demographics portion of the instrument was developed so that background information could be collected about participants and so a profile could be complied of the average modern agricultural writer/editor. This section was placed at the top of the surveys and included eight questions.

Specific Writing and Editing Proficiencies Section

This section dealt with the proficiencies specifically related to those needed in the profession of writing and editing. These competencies were also discovered after a thorough review of the literature and refinement of the proficiencies by a panel of experts. There were 57 proficiencies included in this section.

General Communications Proficiencies Section

The researcher and thesis committee reviewed various studies involving agricultural communications proficiencies and curriculum issues to determine proficiencies commonly found within the agricultural writing/editing profession (Terry et al., 1994). There were 67 proficiencies included in this section.

The general communications competencies identified were those used by professionals working in communications as a result of a review of the literature and panel of expert contributions (Terry et al., 1994). There were 58 proficiencies included in this section.

Instrument Design

The first survey was the writing and editing focused survey, which began with the demographic section. The next five questions focused on the technical agriculture proficiencies and the second five were comprised of the general communications proficiencies, while the forth section included an exhaustive list (n=57) of specific writing and editing proficiencies (Appendix B).

The second survey was the technical agriculture focused survey, which began with the demographic section. The next was first five questions focused on general communications proficiencies and the second five were comprised of the specific writing and editing proficiencies, while the forth section included an exhaustive list (n=68) of technical agriculture proficiencies (Appendix B).

The third survey was the general communications focused survey, which began with the demographic section. The next five questions focused on technical agriculture proficiencies and the second five comprised the specific writing and editing proficiencies,

while the forth section included an exhaustive list (n=67) of general communications proficiencies (Appendix C).

Instrument Error

During the data collection process respondents had difficulty accessing the online survey via a URL link provided by the researcher. It was deemed that because of a defective server, a lower response rate may have resulted, to the researcher's regret.

Those respondents who had trouble accessing and/or submitting the survey had the option to contact the researcher for a faxed version of the instrument (Appendix C). A comparison between surveys submitted online and those returned to the researcher via fax was never assessed as the researcher submitted faxed versions online and there would be no way to distinguish the faxed versions from the surveys originally submitted online. The researcher regrets this error.

Instrument Validity and Reliability

The instrument was reviewed by a panel of experts (Appendix D), consisting of seven Oklahoma State University faculty members, and two professionals from the *Stillwater Newspress* newspaper, and the editor of the *Outdoor Oklahoman* magazine. This panel assisted in the content validity of the instrument, as they were knowledgeable about the desired content and target audience. The panel yielded a list of modified proficiencies and unanimously agreed on the removal of 15 items from the list and the rewording of 14 proficiencies.

The partial matrix sampling questions allowed the respondents to answer an abbreviated group of questions from two of the three proficiency areas. Because the

questions from the partial matrix sampling were grouped into proficiency areas, the questions can then be conceptualized to the entire population (Edwards & Briars, 1999).

A reliability analysis was performed post-data collection on the frequency questions for each section of the instrument. Because the questions were scaled, a Cronbach's alpha was performed for each section. Reliability coefficient for the agriculture questions was 0.9931; reliability coefficient for the general communications was 0.9805, and the reliability coefficient for the specific writing and editing questions 0.9793.

A pilot test was conducted from November 18, 2003, to December 3, 2003. The pilot test was used to establish reliability and face validity in the instrument. Upon review of the pilot data and feedback from the respondents the researcher made changes to the format of the survey before it was sent out for data collection. The pilot group consisted of 85 professional agricultural writers and/or editors who are members of the American Agricultural Editors Association, Livestock Publications Council, or American Horse Publications and were selected at random with the aid of a random numbers table.

Data Collection Procedures

The Dual Method for Web-Based Data Collection (Dillman, 2000) was used in an attempt to increase response rate and ease of data collection. It is dual in that there are two parts. The first was the use of e-mail, which was used to send out an introductory e-mail (Appendix E), survey invitation including URL (Appendix F), and follow-up reminders (Appendix G). The second part to this method is the use of the Web. The Web was used to access the survey with the provided URL address and to submit the completed survey.

The invitation e-mail was sent to participants on February 10, letting them know the instrument and instructions would be forthcoming. Three days later, February 13, another e-mail was sent to participants including a link to the survey, other information about the study, and contact information of the researchers. Three reminders were sent to the population starting the second week after the instrument sent out and continued weekly until the end of the survey. Data collection ended on March 14.

Non-response rate was assessed by comparing early to late responses. The responses to selected items from the first week of data collection were compared with responses from the final week. No differences were noted by the researcher allowing the data to be generalized to the entire population.

Analysis of Data

The researcher used the Statistical Package for Social Sciences® (SPSS) version 11.0 for Windows software program to analyze all data. The data was recorded in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet and converted to SPSS software for analysis. Descriptive statistics were used to help establish statistics such as frequencies, means, and percentages for each of the proficiencies.

Chapter Summary

This study examined proficiencies needed by agricultural communicators. Members of the following professional organizations were selected to participate in this census study: Livestock Publications Council, American Agricultural Editors Association, and American Horse Publications.

Data were analyzed through the Statistical Package for Social Sciences® version 11.0 for Windows.

Table 20

Teaching method(s) for general communications proficiencies perceived as important by 50 to 74% or more of respondents.

Proficiency	Teaching Method(s) R%	E%	W %	I%	N%	NR %
Compare the effectiveness of various dissemination systems for different messages and audiences.	50.0	19.4	22.2	0.0	0.0	8.3
Discuss and define communications regulations, fairness doctrine, libel, privacy and commercial speech.	69.4	16.7	8.3	0.0	0.0	5.6
Write speeches using effective formats and formulas.	19.4	38.9	27.8	0.0	8.3	5.6
Use creative skills to develop introductions to effectively engage an audience in a speech.	19.4	44.4	25.0	0.0	5.6	5.6
Customize a speech for a specific audience.	19.4	36.1	30.6	0.0	8.3	5.6
Apply effective speaking techniques.	22.2	36.1	30.6	0.0	5.6	5.6
Use the voice to maintain the interest of the audience.	19.4	33.3	33.3	0.0	5.6	8.3
Use a variety of inflection, tone and volume.	19.4	36.1	33.3	5.6	0.0	5.6
Use appropriate hand and facial expressions.	19.4	36.1	30.6	0.0	5.6	8.3
Assess the level of agricultural literacy in the United States.	36.1	19.4	22.2	0.0	13.9	8.3
Discuss the cultural impact of agricultural trade.	38.9	30.6	19.4	0.0	5.6	5.6

Table 20 (continued)

List the barriers that exist when communicating agricultural information in international situations.	27.8	30.6	25.0	0.0	11.1	5.6
Contrast the uniqueness of agricultural communications to other types of communications.	38.9	25.0	22.2	0.0	8.3	5.6
Gain experience in the applications of agricultural communications theories in the workplace.	38.9	13.9	2.8	25.0	11.1	8.3
Create media program formats	33.3	25.0	19.4	2.8	13.9	5.6
Resolve conflicts.	22.2	19.4	27.8	2.8	22.2	5.6
Evaluate the performance of co-workers.	11.1	27.8	27.8	2.8	25.0	5.6
Demonstrate sales skills.	38.9	25.0	8.3	8.3	13.9	5.6

Note. R=required, E=elective, W=workshop, I=internship, N=not at all, NR= no response

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter I served as an introduction to this study. The study assessed the proficiencies needed to be a viable member on a writing and/or editorial staff. Little is known about how effective the current agricultural communications curriculum is in producing graduates with, proficiencies professionals feel are important. The proficiencies must be determined, so agricultural communications graduates will be more prepared for a career within modern industry.

Chapter II focused on a review of literature. Agricultural communications programs were born at the university level, and their establishment coincided with the development of the extension function in the early decades of the twentieth century. Agricultural communications was developed out of a need to disseminate extension and research findings. Agricultural communicators were required to have a specific knowledge of both agriculture and journalism, skills unique to the profession. Today's agricultural communications programs are well established, with approximately 30 university agricultural communications programs in existence (Doerfert & Cepica, 1991).

Methods and procedures for this study were outlined in Chapter III. An online survey instrument was developed. After pilot testing the instrument, there were 302 participants. There were 28 bad e-mail addressees identified and excluded from the

population leaving an assessable population of 274. The population consisted of members of the following organizations: Livestock Publications Council (n=129), American Agricultural Editors Association (n=131) and the American Horse Publications (n=127). The dual method for web-based data collection (Dillman, 2000) was used in an attempt to increase response rate. At the mid-point of the data collection process, the bad e-mail addresses were excluded from the population leaving 274 accessible addresses. A response rate of 32.8% (90 out of 274) was achieved.

Chapter IV described the findings obtained in the study. The results addressed the specific objectives of the study pertaining to writing/editing, agriculture, and communications proficiencies. It also indicated how frequently they are used and how they should be taught.

The purpose of this chapter is to review and summarize the findings of the study. Based upon the analysis of the data presented in the previous chapter, conclusions, implications and recommendations are organized and displayed.

Summary

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the proficiencies writing and editing professionals perceive as important, the frequency they use these proficiencies and how these proficiencies should be taught to students pursuing careers as professional writers or editors.

Objectives of the Study

To accomplish the purpose of this study, the following objectives were generated:

1. Describe the demographic characteristics of agriculture writing and editing professionals.
2. Determine important specific writing and editing proficiencies, how frequently these proficiencies are used, and how they should be taught in an undergraduate agricultural communications curriculum based on perceptions of writing and editing professionals.
3. Determine important technical agriculture proficiencies, how frequently these proficiencies are used, and how they should be taught in an undergraduate agricultural communications curriculum based on perceptions of writing and editing professionals.
4. Determine important general communications proficiencies, how frequently these proficiencies are used, and how they should be taught in an undergraduate agricultural communications curriculum based on perceptions of writing and editing professionals.

Scope of the Study

This study was a census study of agricultural writers and editors who are members of the following professional organizations: Livestock Publications Council (LPC) (n=129), American Agricultural Editors Association (AAEA) (n=131) and the American Horse Publications (AHP) (n=127). The population included a total of 387 agriculture writers and editors. The group is representative of agriculture writers and editors in the United States. It was discovered by the researcher that a few people with in the population were members of one or more of the groups. To prevent possible inaccuracies in the data due to some respondents filling out more then one survey due to

multiple memberships within the population, the researcher eliminated all of the duplicate email addresses so each participant would only be on the list of participants once.

Methods and Procedures

Descriptive statistics were collected with a Web-based survey. The survey was sent to members of the above organizations. Responses were calculated and reported with percentages and statistics using SPSS. Demographic information was collected to establish a profile for Agricultural writers and editors.

Conclusions

Conclusions Related to Objective 1

1. The average agricultural writing and editing professional is:

   Male (52.2%); between the age range of 26-45 years old (52.2%); have been in the writing and/or editing field 13 or more years (52.2%); have held two writing and/or editing positions within their career (27.8%); have a high perceived level of agriculture knowledge (41.1%); had 10 or more agriculture courses in their college curriculum (40.0%); and have a bachelor's degree (92.2%).

Conclusions Related to Objective 2

1. Respondents use English-based skills including grammar, punctuation, word usage, agreement, spelling, etc. on a daily basis.

2. Agricultural writers and editors did not put much emphasis on demographics, culture or geography as a means of defining a mass audience.
3. Respondents noted that the ability to create and design a Web page was a proficiency needed to be a successful writer and/or editor.
4. Participants indicated the fundamentals of writing (i.e., word usage, grammar, etc.) should be required curriculum as should the ability to write in various styles and formats.

Conclusions Related to Objective 3

1. Agricultural writers and editors agree agriculture is important, but the importance of technical agricultural courses in the curriculum is low or not as important as communications and journalism-type courses.
2. Respondents agreed agribusiness, marketing, and government/legislative issues were important for daily use and should be taught in the curriculum.
3. Issues dealing with more applied types of agriculture (i.e., genetics, breeds of animals, reproduction, tillage techniques, etc.) were found to be not as important as the agribusiness and marketing-type proficiencies and were recommended by the population to be taught as electives.
4. The ability to be knowledgeable of global warming, cloning, hybrids, genetic engineering, food safety issues, etc. was noted as being desirable among the respondents of the study.

Conclusions Related to Objective 4

1. Being able to report things correctly, meet deadlines, and gather information all proved to be important proficiencies for a future writer/editor to master.
2. Being fluent in word processing software, e-mail, and the Internet is among the top daily skills used by the respondents.

Recommendations

1. Future curriculum for agricultural writers and editors should include the following core areas: writing, editing, layout and design, human relations, photography, speech/presentation, and time management skills.
2. Agricultural knowledge should be taught in a broad format.
3. Graduates should improve their abilities to write, edit, multi-task, work in a group, and understand business/economic principles before graduating.
4. Web technology (i.e., creating/designing Web pages) courses should not be required in the curriculum for future agricultural writers and editors, as respondents perceived these proficiencies to be unimportant.
5. Coursework in Agribusiness/Agricultural Economics principles should be required courses in an Agricultural Communications curriculum according to respondents.
6. Students should understand agricultural issues, why they are important to non-agriculture audiences and how to disseminate agriculturally-based

information to both agricultural audiences, and non-agricultural audiences through various types of writing for various types of media.

7. An understanding of modernized technology (i.e., cloning, biotechnology, food-borne viruses, etc.) must be included in the curriculum.
8. The proficiencies identified in this study should be used to develop writing and editing curriculum for undergraduate agricultural communications students.
9. Professionals and university faculty should come together to help refine curriculum using the findings of this study so students are better prepared for the job market.

Recommendations for Research

1. Studies should be conducted to determine methods of grouping the proficiencies identified in this study.
2. Future studies should be conducted to identify proficiencies for advertising, graphic design, and other agricultural communications career areas so specialization curriculum can be developed to suit the student's career plans.

Implications

This study confirmed that the proficiencies from the Terry et. al (1994) study are still important and relevant for the modern agricultural writer/editor. The study also

allowed the researcher to establish a frequency of use and teaching method(s) for the proficiencies listed in the instrument.

In future, research the data collected from this study should be incorporated into agricultural communications curriculum using the information for frequency of use and teaching method for each of the proficiencies.

This study and others support the call for the establishment of a national core curriculum for agricultural communications. If a national core curriculum was to be developed then it would possibly bring more national recognition of agricultural communications, accreditation, uniformed training, and may lead to funding opportunities may become.

Agricultural Communications curriculum needs to continue to evolve to keep its niche and continue to fulfill its function as a historically relevant body that serves as a link between agriculture and all types of audiences.

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APPENDIX A

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

Oklahoma State University
Institutional Review Board

Protocol Expires: 7/31/2004

Date: Friday, August 01, 2003 IRB Application No AG042

Proposal Title: AGRICULTURAL COMMUNICATIONS CURRICULUM COMPETENCIES IN AGRICULTURAL WRITING AND EDITING

Principal Investigator(s):

Gina Ciuffetelli
448 Ag
Stillwater, OK 74078

Dwayne Cartmell
448 Ag
Stillwater, OK 74078

Reviewed and Processed as: Exempt

Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

Dear PI :

Your IRB application referenced above has been approved for one calendar year. Please make note of the expiration date indicated above. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in section 45 CFR 46.

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

1. Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol must be submitted with the appropriate signatures for IRB approval.
2. Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period of one calendar year. This continuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
3. Report any adverse events to the IRB Chair promptly. Adverse events are those which are unanticipated and impact the subjects during the course of this research; and
4. Notify the IRB office in writing when your research project is complete.

Please note that approved projects are subject to monitoring by the IRB. If you have questions about the IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact Sharon Bacher, the Executive Secretary to the IRB, in 415 Whitehurst (phone: 405-744-5700, sbacher@okstate.edu).

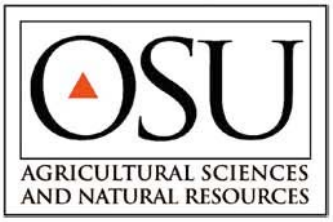
Sincerely,

Carol Olson By David C. Thomas

Carol Olson, Chair
Institutional Review Board

APPENDIX B

INSTRUMENTS



Agricultural Communications Curriculum Proficiencies

Demographics (*Please answer as indicated.*)

1. What is your gender? – Click Here –

2. What is your age? – Click Here –

3. How many years have you been in writing and editing? – Click Here –

4. How many different full-time writing and editing jobs have you had in your career? (including current position) – Click Here –

5. What college or university degrees have you earned? (*Mark all that apply.*)

- ☐ None
- ☐ Associate (major)
- ☐ Bachelors (major)
- ☐ Masters (major)
- ☐ Education Specialist (major)
- ☐ Professional (J.D., etc.)(major)
- ☐ Doctorate (major)

6. How would you rate your level of knowledge about the agriculture, food, fiber and natural resources industry? – Click Here –

7. List the approximate number of college courses in agriculture you have completed. – Click Here –

8. What types of experiences have you had in agriculture? (*Mark all that apply.*)

- ☐ none
- ☐ paid work experience
- ☐ unpaid work experience
- ☐ live(d) in a rural area
- ☐ live(d) on a farm
- ☐ own(ed) a farm
- ☐ work(ed) in a rural area
- ☐ work(ed) on a farm
- ☐ work(ed) for an agricultural business
- ☐ own(ed) an agricultural business
- ☐ high school agriculture course
- ☐ college agriculture course
- ☐ extension workshops in agriculture

☐ other _____ (specify)

Below is a list of proficiencies in the area of **agriculture**. To the LEFT, designate **the importance** of the proficiency and how **frequently you use** the proficiency in your professional area.

To the RIGHT, indicate how the proficiency should be **included in the ideal agricultural communications curriculum**.

Important	Frequency of Use: Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	How to Include: Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Discuss the impact of government and legislative policy upon agriculture.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Analyze the public perception of plant and animal food issues.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Determine the impact of biotechnology on world production systems.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand the impacts and controversies surrounding genetically modified organisms.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Discuss environmental/global issues such as global warming and desertification and the relationship of agriculture with those issues.	○	○	○	○	○

Below is a list of proficiencies in the area of **communications**. To the LEFT, designate **the importance** of the proficiency and how
frequently you use the proficiency in your professional area.

To the RIGHT, indicate how the proficiency should be **included in the ideal agricultural communications curriculum**.

Important	Frequency of Use: Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	How to Include: Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Write features about agricultural topics.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Describe the purpose of agricultural communications.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Identify and fix barriers to effective communication.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Compare the effectiveness of various dissemination systems for different messages and audiences.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Apply effective speaking techniques.	○	○	○	○	○

Below is a list of proficiencies in the area of **writing and editing**. To the LEFT, designate **the importance** of the proficiency and how
frequently you use the proficiency in your professional area.

To the RIGHT, indicate how the proficiency should be **included in the ideal agricultural communications curriculum**.

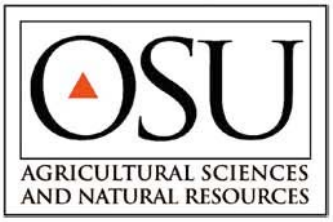
Important	Frequency of Use: Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	How to Include: Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Use basic news style of writing.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Use and understand proper spelling, grammar and puncutation.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Write a professional letter, e-mail, and/or memorandum.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Identifiy what makes a story newsworthy.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Research both sides of an issue.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Check facts.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Identify biased information.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Identify the importance of correctly reported facts.	○	○	○	○	○
Important	Frequency of Use: Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	How to Include: Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Give an effective interview.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Write a news story.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Write a feature story.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Write captions for photos.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Perform the process of seeking, gathering and synthesizing information.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Write in active voice vs. passive voice.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Proper usage of direct quotes, indirect quotes and paraphrasing.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Use the different types of leads.	○	○	○	○	○
Important	Frequency of Use: Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	How to Include: Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Use the qualities of media writers (i.e., talent with lannguage, meeting of deadlines, literate with technology, vision, integrity, creativity, ethics and loyalty).	○	○	○	○	○

Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand the factors that define define mass audiences (i.e., geography, bakgrounds, demographics, economics, and culture)..	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand how mass media differ,(i.e., portability, timeliness, perception, durability, and engagement).	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand the news values: uniqueness, (oddity, importance, closeness (proximity), impact, conflict, currency, and interest.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Explain the news typologies: backgrounders, breaking story, column, enterprise, feature, follow-up, hard news, soft news, human interest, sports, etc.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand and use the types of sources: primary, secondary, and experts.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Properly identify and attribute sources.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Know how to use and write the various types of headlines.	○	○	○	○	○
	Frequency of Use						How to Include				
Important	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Know proper word usage and agreement.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand the purpose of the inverted pyramid style of newspapers.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Use layout types: modular, u-shaped, pyramid, well shaped, etc.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand and use type terms: serif, sans serif, true type, dingbat, etc.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand the differences in font styles and families.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Know about leading, kerning and other font manipulation techniques.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Know font sizes and measurements: picas, points, etc.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand all types of defamation and know why they are bad.	○	○	○	○	○
	Frequency of Use						How to Include				
Important	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Know the following terms: slug, byline, butting heads, copy, cutline, dummy, drop cap, flag, process color, spot color, signature, and kicker.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand balance layout.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand what makes a layout more readable and desirable to a reader's eye.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Know how to correctly compose a picture.	○	○	○	○	○

Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand lighting fundamentals as they relate to a subject(s).	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Be able to use and understand aperture and shutter speed functions and how they relate to light.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Determine appropriate light types of film speeds.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Be able to crop and adjust images.	○	○	○	○	○
	Frequency of Use						How to Include				
Important	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Take a photograph of agricultural subjects.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Determine the appropriate camera and film for different purposes.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Know proper use of a 35mm camera.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Know proper use of a digital camera	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand how to do and use the following terms: cutout, half tone, bleed, white space, gutter, etc.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Ability to correctly scan a photo.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Use desktop publishing techniques and equipment.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Know word processing: create, edit, manipulate, and format documents.	○	○	○	○	○
	Frequency of Use						How to Include				
Important	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Effectively scan a document.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Identify proper file formats when scanning programs.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Develop a multimedia presentation.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Know how to effectively use word processing software.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Ability to effectively use desktop publishing software.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Know how to effectively use photo-manipulation software.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Know how to effectively use presentation software.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Write for the web.	○	○	○	○	○

Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Create and design a Web page.	○	○	○	○	○
	Frequency of Use						How to Include				
Important	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Other:	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Other:	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Other:	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Other:	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Other:	○	○	○	○	○

Submit Reset Form



Agricultural Communications Curriculum Proficiencies

Demographics (*Please answer as indicated.*)

1. What is your gender? – Click Here –

2. What is your age? – Click Here –

3. How many years have you been in writing and editing? – Click Here –

4. How many different full-time writing and editing jobs have you had in your career? (including current position.) – Click Here –

5. What college or university degrees have you earned? (*Mark all that apply.*)

- ☐ None
- ☐ Associate (major)
- ☐ Bachelors (major)
- ☐ Masters (major)
- ☐ Education Specialist (major)
- ☐ Professional (J.D., etc.)(major)
- ☐ Doctorate (major)

6. How would you rate your level of knowledge about the agriculture, food, fiber and natural resources industry? – Click Here –

7. List the approximate number of college courses in agriculture you have completed. – Click Here –

8. What types of experiences have you had in agriculture? (*Mark all that apply.*)

- ☐ none
- ☐ paid work experience
- ☐ unpaid work experience
- ☐ live(d) in a rural area
- ☐ live(d) on a farm
- ☐ own(ed) a farm
- ☐ work(ed) in a rural area
- ☐ work(ed) on a farm
- ☐ work(ed) for an agricultural business
- ☐ own(ed) an agricultural business
- ☐ high school agriculture course
- ☐ college agriculture course
- ☐ extension workshops in agriculture

☐ other ☐ (specify)

Below is a list of proficiencies in the area of **agriculture**. To the LEFT, designate **the importance** of the proficiency and how **frequently you use** the proficiency in your professional area.

To the RIGHT, indicate how the proficiency should be **included in the ideal agricultural communications curriculum**.

Important	Frequency of Use: Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	How to Include: Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Discuss the impact of government and legislative policy upon agriculture.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Analyze the public perception of plant and animal food issues.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Determine the impact of biotechnology on world production systems.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand the impacts and controversies surrounding genetically modified organisms.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Discuss environmental/global issues such as global warming and desertification and the relationship of agriculture with those issues.	○	○	○	○	○

Below is a list of proficiencies in the area of **writing and editing**. To the LEFT, designate **the importance** of the proficiency and how
frequently you use the proficiency in your professional area.

To the RIGHT, indicate how the proficiency should be **included in the ideal agricultural communications curriculum**.

Important	Frequency of Use: Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	How to Include: Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Write a news story.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Identify what makes a story newsworthy.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand the news values: unigueness, oddity, impact, closeness (proximity), conflict, currency and interest.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand all types of defamation and why they are bad.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand what makes a layout more readable and desirable to a reader's eye.	○	○	○	○	○

Below is a list of proficiencies in the area of **communications**. To the LEFT, designate **the importance** of the proficiency and how
frequently you use the proficiency in your professional area.

To the RIGHT, indicate how the proficiency should be **included in the ideal agricultural communications curriculum**.

Important	Frequency of Use					Proficiencies	How to Include				
	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never		Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Write using appropriate style (i.e. AP, VPI).	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Describe the principles of journalism clearly and concisely.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Apply reporting and writing skills in a "real world" situation.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Describe ethical challenges faced by reporters.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Interview a source of information for a news article.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Edit the work of others; accurately proofread a document.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Use correct editing marks and symbols.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Critique and correct layout and design of publications.	○	○	○	○	○
Important	Frequency of Use					Proficiencies	How to Include				
	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never		Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Describe common dilemmas faced by journalists.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Discuss ethical standards existing in the field of journalism.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Determine ethical solutions to problems.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Describe the ways in which news and other information is disseminated to the public.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Compare the effectiveness of various dissemination systems for different messages and audiences.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Discuss legal problems facing journalists, broadcasters and advertisers.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Discuss and define communicatons regulations, fairness doctrine, libel, privacy and commercial speech.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Select appropriate topics in speech writing.	○	○	○	○	○
Important	Frequency of Use					Proficiencies	How to Include				
	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never		Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Write speeches using effective formats and formulas.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Use creative skills to develop introductions to	○	○	○	○	○

						effectively engage an audience in a speech.					
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Customize a speech for a specific audience.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Apply effective speaking techniques.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Use the voice to maintain the interest of the audience.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Use a variety of inflection, tone and volume.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Use appropriate hand and facial expressions.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Describe the impact of agriculture upon all Americans.	○	○	○	○	○

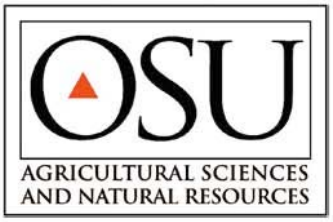
	Frequency of Use						How to Include				
Important	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Describe the agricultural community in the United States.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Assess the level of agricultural literacy in the United States.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Use a variety of means including print, radio and video to inform the public.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Write features about agricultural topics.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Describe the role agriculture plays in international relations.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Discuss the cultural impact of agricultural trade.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	List the barriers that exist when communicating agricultural information in international situations.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Contrast the uniqueness of agricultural communications to other types of communications.	○	○	○	○	○

	Frequency of Use						How to Include				
Important	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Describe the purpose of agricultural communications.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Apply agricultural communications techniques and skills.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Gain experience in the applications of agricultural communications theories in the workplace.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Demonstrate the characteristics of responsibility and credibility.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Model proficiency in time management and organization.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Create media program formats.	○	○	○	○	○

Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Navigate Internet; send and receive e-mail.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Transfer and download information through a network.	○	○	○	○	○
	Frequency of Use						How to Include				
Important	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Use graphics effectively to increase understanding.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Apply human relations skills.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Resolve conflicts.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Evaluate the performance of co-workers.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Write a quality thank you note.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Identify and fix barriers to effective communication.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Interview for employment.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Work in a team activity.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Work under pressure.	○	○	○	○	○
	Frequency of Use						How to Include				
Important	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Correctly report facts.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand government systems and how they affect agriculture.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Cite sources.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Gather and synthesize information.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Perform basic word processing	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Converse knowledgeably on different areas in agriculture.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Determine whether a topic would be best covered in a news article or feature article.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Create a resume.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Identify bias in media stories.	○	○	○	○	○

Important	Frequency of Use					Proficiencies	How to Include				
	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never		Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Write for the Internet.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Discuss Freedom of Information Act.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Demonstrate sales skills.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Discuss the importance of belonging to a professional organization.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Interpret statistics.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Use an Associated Press Stylebook.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Interpret the basics of the commodities market.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Apply common sense logic to an economic trend analysis.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Analyze and apply technical data.	○	○	○	○	○
Important	Frequency of Use					Proficiencies	How to Include				
	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never		Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Other:	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Other:	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Other:	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Other:	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Other:	○	○	○	○	○

Submit Reset Form



Agricultural Communications Curriculum Proficiencies

Demographics (*Please answer as indicated.*)

1. What is your gender? – Click Here –

2. What is your age? – Click Here –

3. How many years have you been in writing and editing? – Click Here –

4. How many different full-time writing and editing jobs have you had in your career? (including current position.) – Click Here –

5. What college or university degrees have you earned? (*Mark all that apply.*)

- ☐ None
- ☐ Associate (major)
- ☐ Bachelors (major)
- ☐ Masters (major)
- ☐ Education Specialist (major)
- ☐ Professional (J.D., etc.)(major)
- ☐ Doctorate (major)

6. How would you rate your level of knowledge about the agriculture, food, fiber and natural resources industry? – Click Here –

7. List the approximate number of college courses in agriculture you have completed. – Click Here –

8. What types of experiences have you had in agriculture? (*Mark all that apply.*)

- ☐ none
- ☐ paid work experience
- ☐ unpaid work experience
- ☐ live(d) in a rural area
- ☐ live(d) on a farm
- ☐ own(ed) a farm
- ☐ work(ed) in a rural area
- ☐ work(ed) on a farm
- ☐ work(ed) for an agricultural business
- ☐ own(ed) an agricultural business
- ☐ high school agriculture course
- ☐ college agriculture course
- ☐ extension workshops in agriculture

☐ other _____ (specify)

Below is a list of proficiencies in the area of **communications**. To the LEFT, designate **the importance** of the proficiency and how
frequently you use the proficiency in your professional area.

To the RIGHT, indicate how the proficiency should be **included in the ideal agricultural communications curriculum**.

Important	Frequency of Use: Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	How to Include: Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Write features about agricultural topics.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Describe the purpose of agricultural communications.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Identify and fix barriers to effective communication.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Compare the effectiveness of various dissemination systems for different messages and audiences.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Apply effective speaking techniques.	○	○	○	○	○

Below is a list of proficiencies in the area of **writing and editing**. To the LEFT, designate **the importance** of the proficiency and how
frequently you use the proficiency in your professional area.

To the RIGHT, indicate how the proficiency should be **included in the ideal agricultural communications curriculum**.

Important	Frequency of Use: Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	How to Include: Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Write a news story.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Identify what makes a story newsworthy.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand the news values: uniqueness, oddity, impact, closeness (proximity), conflict, currency and interest.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand all types of defamation and why they are bad.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand what makes a layout more readable and desirable to a reader's eye.	○	○	○	○	○

Below is a list of proficiencies in the area of **agriculture**. To the LEFT, designate **the importance** of the proficiency and how **frequently you use** the proficiency in your professional area.

To the RIGHT, indicate how the proficiency should be **included in the ideal agricultural communications curriculum**.

Important	Frequency of Use					Proficiencies	How to Include				
	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never		Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Discuss the definition and types of agribusiness marketing.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Describe marketing theories related to price, grading, elasticity, etc.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Discuss the impact of government and legislative policy upon agriculture.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Describe the purpose of and rationale for farm programs.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Evaluate the effectiveness of U.S. agricultural policy in foreign markets.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Discuss the factors that stimulate and inhibit economic growth.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Define and compare the sources of credit for agricultural institutions.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Apply the concepts of indifference curves, supply/demand, and production functions.	○	○	○	○	○

Important	Frequency of Use					Proficiencies	How to Include				
	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never		Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Describe major world food and fiber crops including where they were produced geographically and explain their intended uses.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Demonstrate an understanding of plant growth and development.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Describe soil principles including fertility and water management.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Discuss characteristics unique to animal products and their related industries.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Report on the impact of biotechnology in agricultural animals.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Analyze the public perception of plant and animal food issues.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Summarize the economic and management roles of producing agricultural animals.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Define conservation.	○	○	○	○	○

Important	Frequency of Use					Proficiencies	How to Include				
	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never		Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Discuss the ways that humans impact the ecosystem and methods of making it stable.	○	○	○	○	○
						Discuss environmental/global issues such as global					

Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	warming and desertification and the relationship of agriculture with those issues.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Describe the effects of agriculture upon erosion and the introduction of chemical compounds in the environment.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Define ecology and related terms.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Describe the basics of food classification, modern processing and quality/safety control.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Define and explain budget, cost, credit and tax and how they relate to agribusiness.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Explain opportunity cost.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Prepare a budget.	○	○	○	○	○
	Frequency of Use						How to Include				
Important	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Identify governmental regulatory agencies related to agribusiness.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Identify current government programs that support agricultural business.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	List the purposes of governmental farm agencies.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Identify feedstuffs available to livestock enterprises and describe their nutritional values.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Interpret charts, graphs and maps to make specific decisions related to business.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Demonstrate the proper procedures for administering animal health products.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Evaluate livestock for profitable production traits.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Identify the types of wholesale and retail cuts of meat.	○	○	○	○	○
	Frequency of Use						How to Include				
Important	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Explain the methods for proper handling and disposal of animal waste.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Explain how the selection of hybrid and certified seed affects performance and profitability.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Identify the types of tillage methods used in crop production.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Determine the impact of biotechnology on the world food production systems.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Explain the impact of governmental policy on the production and marketing of various commodities.	○	○	○	○	○

Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Identify career opportunities in production agriculture.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Identify major genetic characteristics of animal breeds and examine their uses in the animal's breeding systems and scientific principles.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Demonstrate safe and humane animal handling techniques.	○	○	○	○	○
	Frequency of Use						How to Include				
Important	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Identify and compare the operation of equipment and facilities involved with livestock for optimum production efficiency.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Analyze the economic impact of production agriculture on the economy.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Use observational techniques to identify healthy, quality plants.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Explain the process of photosynthesis.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Explain lawn and turf maintenance.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Identify fruits and nuts by common name.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Identify vegetables and herd by common name.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Identify floriculture crops including houseplants by common name.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Explain the importance of quality assurance of food and fiber products.	○	○	○	○	○
	Frequency of Use						How to Include				
Important	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Explain the concepts of food sanitation and safety.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Explain the ethical and cultural concerns of biotechnology in agricultural processing.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Recognize what DNA and clones mean.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Define precision farming.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Define phenotype and genotype.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Know water issues.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Know specific insect pests.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand urban agriculture.	○	○	○	○	○

Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand the impacts and controversies surrounding genetically modified organisms.	○	○	○	○	○
	Frequency of Use						How to Include				
Important	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Other:	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Other:	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Other:	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Other:	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Other:	○	○	○	○	○

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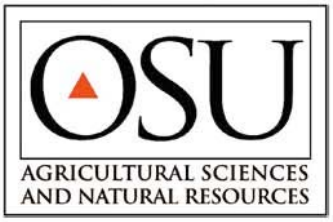
APPENDIX C

FAXED INSTRUMENTS



Agricultural Communications Curriculum Proficiencies

Demographics (*Please answer as indicated.*)

1. What is your gender? – Click Here –

2. What is your age? – Click Here –

3. How many years have you been in writing and editing? – Click Here –

4. How many different full-time writing and editing jobs have you had in your career? (including current position) – Click Here –

5. What college or university degrees have you earned? (*Mark all that apply.*)

- ☐ None
- ☐ Associate (major)
- ☐ Bachelors (major)
- ☐ Masters (major)
- ☐ Education Specialist (major)
- ☐ Professional (J.D., etc.)(major)
- ☐ Doctorate (major)

6. How would you rate your level of knowledge about the agriculture, food, fiber and natural resources industry? – Click Here –

7. List the approximate number of college courses in agriculture you have completed. – Click Here –

8. What types of experiences have you had in agriculture? (*Mark all that apply.*)

- ☐ none
- ☐ paid work experience
- ☐ unpaid work experience
- ☐ live(d) in a rural area
- ☐ live(d) on a farm
- ☐ own(ed) a farm
- ☐ work(ed) in a rural area
- ☐ work(ed) on a farm
- ☐ work(ed) for an agricultural business
- ☐ own(ed) an agricultural business
- ☐ high school agriculture course
- ☐ college agriculture course
- ☐ extension workshops in agriculture

☐ other _____ (specify)

Below is a list of proficiencies in the area of **agriculture**. To the LEFT, designate **the importance** of the proficiency and how **frequently you use** the proficiency in your professional area.

To the RIGHT, indicate how the proficiency should be **included in the ideal agricultural communications curriculum**.

Important	Frequency of Use: Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	How to Include: Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Discuss the impact of government and legislative policy upon agriculture.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Analyze the public perception of plant and animal food issues.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Determine the impact of biotechnology on world production systems.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand the impacts and controversies surrounding genetically modified organisms.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Discuss environmental/global issues such as global warming and desertification and the relationship of agriculture with those issues.	○	○	○	○	○

Below is a list of proficiencies in the area of **communications**. To the LEFT, designate **the importance** of the proficiency and how
frequently you use the proficiency in your professional area.

To the RIGHT, indicate how the proficiency should be **included in the ideal agricultural communications curriculum**.

Important	Frequency of Use: Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	How to Include: Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Write features about agricultural topics.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Describe the purpose of agricultural communications.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Identify and fix barriers to effective communication.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Compare the effectiveness of various dissemination systems for different messages and audiences.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Apply effective speaking techniques.	○	○	○	○	○

Below is a list of proficiencies in the area of **writing and editing**. To the LEFT, designate **the importance** of the proficiency and how
frequently you use the proficiency in your professional area.

To the RIGHT, indicate how the proficiency should be **included in the ideal agricultural communications curriculum**.

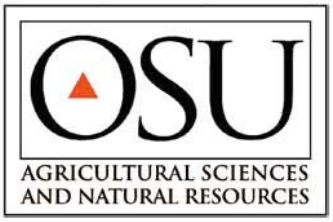
Important	Frequency of Use: Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	How to Include: Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Use basic news style of writing.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Use and understand proper spelling, grammar and puncutation.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Write a professional letter, e-mail, and/or memorandum.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Identifiy what makes a story newsworthy.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Research both sides of an issue.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Check facts.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Identify biased information.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Identify the importance of correctly reported facts.	○	○	○	○	○
Important	Frequency of Use: Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	How to Include: Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Give an effective interview.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Write a news story.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Write a feature story.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Write captions for photos.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Perform the process of seeking, gathering and synthesizing information.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Write in active voice vs. passive voice.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Proper usage of direct quotes, indirect quotes and paraphrasing.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Use the different types of leads.	○	○	○	○	○
Important	Frequency of Use: Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	How to Include: Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Use the qualities of media writers (i.e., talent with lannguage, meeting of deadlines, literate with technology, vision, integrity, creativity, ethics and loyalty).	○	○	○	○	○

Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand the factors that define define mass audiences (i.e., geography, bakgrounds, demographics, economics, and culture)..	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand how mass media differ,(i.e., portability, timeliness, perception, durability, and engagement).	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand the news values: uniqueness, (oddity, importance, closeness (proximity), impact, conflict, currency, and interest.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Explain the news typologies: backgrounders, breaking story, column, enterprise, feature, follow-up, hard news, soft news, human interest, sports, etc.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand and use the types of sources: primary, secondary, and experts.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Properly identify and attribute sources.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Know how to use and write the various types of headlines.	○	○	○	○	○
	Frequency of Use						How to Include				
Important	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Know proper word usage and agreement.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand the purpose of the inverted pyramid style of newspapers.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Use layout types: modular, u-shaped, pyramid, well shaped, etc.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand and use type terms: serif, sans serif, true type, dingbat, etc.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand the differences in font styles and families.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Know about leading, kerning and other font manipulation techniques.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Know font sizes and measurements: picas, points, etc.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand all types of defamation and know why they are bad.	○	○	○	○	○
	Frequency of Use						How to Include				
Important	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Know the following terms: slug, byline, butting heads, copy, cutline, dummy, drop cap, flag, process color, spot color, signature, and kicker.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand balance layout.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand what makes a layout more readable and desirable to a reader's eye.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Know how to correctly compose a picture.	○	○	○	○	○

Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand lighting fundamentals as they relate to a subject(s).	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Be able to use and understand aperture and shutter speed functions and how they relate to light.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Determine appropriate light types of film speeds.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Be able to crop and adjust images.	○	○	○	○	○
	Frequency of Use						How to Include				
Important	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Take a photograph of agricultural subjects.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Determine the appropriate camera and film for different purposes.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Know proper use of a 35mm camera.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Know proper use of a digital camera	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand how to do and use the following terms: cutout, half tone, bleed, white space, gutter, etc.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Ability to correctly scan a photo.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Use desktop publishing techniques and equipment.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Know word processing: create, edit, manipulate, and format documents.	○	○	○	○	○
	Frequency of Use						How to Include				
Important	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Effectively scan a document.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Identify proper file formats when scanning programs.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Develop a multimedia presentation.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Know how to effectively use word processing software.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Ability to effectively use desktop publishing software.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Know how to effectively use photo-manipulation software.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Know how to effectively use presentation software.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Write for the web.	○	○	○	○	○

Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Create and design a Web page.	○	○	○	○	○
	Frequency of Use						How to Include				
Important	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Other:	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Other:	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Other:	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Other:	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Other:	○	○	○	○	○

Submit Reset Form



Agricultural Communications Curriculum Proficiencies

Demographics (*Please answer as indicated.*)

1. What is your gender? – Click Here –

2. What is your age? – Click Here –

3. How many years have you been in writing and editing? – Click Here –

4. How many different full-time writing and editing jobs have you had in your career? (including current position.) – Click Here –

5. What college or university degrees have you earned? (*Mark all that apply.*)

- ☐ None
- ☐ Associate (major)
- ☐ Bachelors (major)
- ☐ Masters (major)
- ☐ Education Specialist (major)
- ☐ Professional (J.D., etc.)(major)
- ☐ Doctorate (major)

6. How would you rate your level of knowledge about the agriculture, food, fiber and natural resources industry? – Click Here –

7. List the approximate number of college courses in agriculture you have completed. – Click Here –

8. What types of experiences have you had in agriculture? (*Mark all that apply.*)

- ☐ none
- ☐ paid work experience
- ☐ unpaid work experience
- ☐ live(d) in a rural area
- ☐ live(d) on a farm
- ☐ own(ed) a farm
- ☐ work(ed) in a rural area
- ☐ work(ed) on a farm
- ☐ work(ed) for an agricultural business
- ☐ own(ed) an agricultural business
- ☐ high school agriculture course
- ☐ college agriculture course
- ☐ extension workshops in agriculture

☐ other ☐ (specify)

Below is a list of proficiencies in the area of **agriculture**. To the LEFT, designate **the importance** of the proficiency and how **frequently you use** the proficiency in your professional area.

To the RIGHT, indicate how the proficiency should be **included in the ideal agricultural communications curriculum**.

Important	Frequency of Use: Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	How to Include: Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Discuss the impact of government and legislative policy upon agriculture.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Analyze the public perception of plant and animal food issues.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Determine the impact of biotechnology on world production systems.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand the impacts and controversies surrounding genetically modified organisms.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Discuss environmental/global issues such as global warming and desertification and the relationship of agriculture with those issues.	○	○	○	○	○

Below is a list of proficiencies in the area of **writing and editing**. To the LEFT, designate **the importance** of the proficiency and how
frequently you use the proficiency in your professional area.

To the RIGHT, indicate how the proficiency should be **included in the ideal agricultural communications curriculum**.

Important	Frequency of Use: Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	How to Include: Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Write a news story.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Identify what makes a story newsworthy.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand the news values: unigueness, oddity, impact, closeness (proximity), conflict, currency and interest.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand all types of defamation and why they are bad.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand what makes a layout more readable and desirable to a reader's eye.	○	○	○	○	○

Below is a list of proficiencies in the area of **communications**. To the LEFT, designate **the importance** of the proficiency and how
frequently you use the proficiency in your professional area.

To the RIGHT, indicate how the proficiency should be **included in the ideal agricultural communications curriculum**.

Important	Frequency of Use					Proficiencies	How to Include				
	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never		Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Write using appropriate style (i.e. AP, VPI).	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Describe the principles of journalism clearly and concisely.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Apply reporting and writing skills in a "real world" situation.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Describe ethical challenges faced by reporters.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Interview a source of information for a news article.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Edit the work of others; accurately proofread a document.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Use correct editing marks and symbols.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Critique and correct layout and design of publications.	○	○	○	○	○

Important	Frequency of Use					Proficiencies	How to Include				
	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never		Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Describe common dilemmas faced by journalists.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Discuss ethical standards existing in the field of journalism.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Determine ethical solutions to problems.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Describe the ways in which news and other information is disseminated to the public.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Compare the effectiveness of various dissemination systems for different messages and audiences.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Discuss legal problems facing journalists, broadcasters and advertisers.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Discuss and define communicatons regulations, fairness doctrine, libel, privacy and commercial speech.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Select appropriate topics in speech writing.	○	○	○	○	○

Important	Frequency of Use					Proficiencies	How to Include				
	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never		Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Write speeches using effective formats and formulas.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Use creative skills to develop introductions to	○	○	○	○	○

Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	effectively engage an audience in a speech.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Customize a speech for a specific audience.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Apply effective speaking techniques.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Use the voice to maintain the interest of the audience.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Use a variety of inflection, tone and volume.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Use appropriate hand and facial expressions.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Describe the impact of agriculture upon all Americans.	○	○	○	○	○

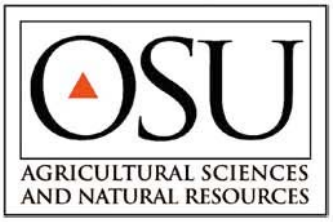
	Frequency of Use						How to Include				
Important	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Describe the agricultural community in the United States.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Assess the level of agricultural literacy in the United States.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Use a variety of means including print, radio and video to inform the public.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Write features about agricultural topics.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Describe the role agriculture plays in international relations.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Discuss the cultural impact of agricultural trade.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	List the barriers that exist when communicating agricultural information in international situations.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Contrast the uniqueness of agricultural communications to other types of communications.	○	○	○	○	○

	Frequency of Use						How to Include				
Important	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Describe the purpose of agricultural communications.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Apply agricultural communications techniques and skills.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Gain experience in the applications of agricultural communications theories in the workplace.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Demonstrate the characteristics of responsibility and credibility.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Model proficiency in time management and organization.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Create media program formats.	○	○	○	○	○

Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Navigate Internet; send and receive e-mail.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Transfer and download information through a network.	○	○	○	○	○
	Frequency of Use						How to Include				
Important	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Use graphics effectively to increase understanding.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Apply human relations skills.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Resolve conflicts.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Evaluate the performance of co-workers.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Write a quality thank you note.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Identify and fix barriers to effective communication.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Interview for employment.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Work in a team activity.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Work under pressure.	○	○	○	○	○
	Frequency of Use						How to Include				
Important	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Correctly report facts.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand government systems and how they affect agriculture.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Cite sources.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Gather and synthesize information.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Perform basic word processing	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Converse knowledgeably on different areas in agriculture.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Determine whether a topic would be best covered in a news article or feature article.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Create a resume.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Identify bias in media stories.	○	○	○	○	○

Important	Frequency of Use: Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	How to Include: Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Write for the Internet.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Discuss Freedom of Information Act.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Demonstrate sales skills.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Discuss the importance of belonging to a professional organization.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Interpret statistics.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Use an Associated Press Stylebook.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Interpret the basics of the commodities market.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Apply common sense logic to an economic trend analysis.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Analyze and apply technical data.	○	○	○	○	○
Important	Frequency of Use: Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	How to Include: Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Other:	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Other:	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Other:	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Other:	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Other:	○	○	○	○	○

Submit Reset Form



Agricultural Communications Curriculum Proficiencies

Demographics (*Please answer as indicated.*)

1. What is your gender? – Click Here –

2. What is your age? – Click Here –

3. How many years have you been in writing and editing? – Click Here –

4. How many different full-time writing and editing jobs have you had in your career? (including current position.) – Click Here –

5. What college or university degrees have you earned? (*Mark all that apply.*)

- ☐ None
- ☐ Associate (major)
- ☐ Bachelors (major)
- ☐ Masters (major)
- ☐ Education Specialist (major)
- ☐ Professional (J.D., etc.)(major)
- ☐ Doctorate (major)

6. How would you rate your level of knowledge about the agriculture, food, fiber and natural resources industry? – Click Here –

7. List the approximate number of college courses in agriculture you have completed. – Click Here –

8. What types of experiences have you had in agriculture? (*Mark all that apply.*)

- ☐ none
- ☐ paid work experience
- ☐ unpaid work experience
- ☐ live(d) in a rural area
- ☐ live(d) on a farm
- ☐ own(ed) a farm
- ☐ work(ed) in a rural area
- ☐ work(ed) on a farm
- ☐ work(ed) for an agricultural business
- ☐ own(ed) an agricultural business
- ☐ high school agriculture course
- ☐ college agriculture course
- ☐ extension workshops in agriculture

☐ other _____ (specify)

Below is a list of proficiencies in the area of **communications**. To the LEFT, designate **the importance** of the proficiency and how
frequently you use the proficiency in your professional area.

To the RIGHT, indicate how the proficiency should be **included in the ideal agricultural communications curriculum**.

Important	Frequency of Use					Proficiencies	How to Include				
	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never		Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Write features about agricultural topics.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Describe the purpose of agricultural communications.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Identify and fix barriers to effective communication.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Compare the effectiveness of various dissemination systems for different messages and audiences.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Apply effective speaking techniques.	○	○	○	○	○

Below is a list of proficiencies in the area of **writing and editing**. To the LEFT, designate **the importance** of the proficiency and how
frequently you use the proficiency in your professional area.

To the RIGHT, indicate how the proficiency should be **included in the ideal agricultural communications curriculum**.

Important	Frequency of Use					Proficiencies	How to Include				
	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never		Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Write a news story.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Identify what makes a story newsworthy.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand the news values: uniqueness, oddity, impact, closeness (proximity), conflict, currency and interest.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand all types of defamation and why they are bad.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand what makes a layout more readable and desirable to a reader's eye.	○	○	○	○	○

Below is a list of proficiencies in the area of **agriculture**. To the LEFT, designate **the importance** of the proficiency and how **frequently you use** the proficiency in your professional area.

To the RIGHT, indicate how the proficiency should be **included in the ideal agricultural communications curriculum**.

Important	Frequency of Use					Proficiencies	How to Include				
	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never		Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Discuss the definition and types of agribusiness marketing.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Describe marketing theories related to price, grading, elasticity, etc.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Discuss the impact of government and legislative policy upon agriculture.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Describe the purpose of and rationale for farm programs.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Evaluate the effectiveness of U.S. agricultural policy in foreign markets.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Discuss the factors that stimulate and inhibit economic growth.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Define and compare the sources of credit for agricultural institutions.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Apply the concepts of indifference curves, supply/demand, and production functions.	○	○	○	○	○

Important	Frequency of Use					Proficiencies	How to Include				
	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never		Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Describe major world food and fiber crops including where they were produced geographically and explain their intended uses.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Demonstrate an understanding of plant growth and development.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Describe soil principles including fertility and water management.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Discuss characteristics unique to animal products and their related industries.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Report on the impact of biotechnology in agricultural animals.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Analyze the public perception of plant and animal food issues.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Summarize the economic and management roles of producing agricultural animals.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Define conservation.	○	○	○	○	○

Important	Frequency of Use					Proficiencies	How to Include				
	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never		Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Discuss the ways that humans impact the ecosystem and methods of making it stable.	○	○	○	○	○
						Discuss environmental/global issues such as global					

Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	warming and desertification and the relationship of agriculture with those issues.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Describe the effects of agriculture upon erosion and the introduction of chemical compounds in the environment.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Define ecology and related terms.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Describe the basics of food classification, modern processing and quality/safety control.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Define and explain budget, cost, credit and tax and how they relate to agribusiness.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Explain opportunity cost.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Prepare a budget.	○	○	○	○	○
	Frequency of Use						How to Include				
Important	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Identify governmental regulatory agencies related to agribusiness.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Identify current government programs that support agricultural business.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	List the purposes of governmental farm agencies.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Identify feedstuffs available to livestock enterprises and describe their nutritional values.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Interpret charts, graphs and maps to make specific decisions related to business.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Demonstrate the proper procedures for administering animal health products.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Evaluate livestock for profitable production traits.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Identify the types of wholesale and retail cuts of meat.	○	○	○	○	○
	Frequency of Use						How to Include				
Important	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Explain the methods for proper handling and disposal of animal waste.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Explain how the selection of hybrid and certified seed affects performance and profitability.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Identify the types of tillage methods used in crop production.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Determine the impact of biotechnology on the world food production systems.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Explain the impact of governmental policy on the production and marketing of various commodities.	○	○	○	○	○

Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Identify career opportunities in production agriculture.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Identify major genetic characteristics of animal breeds and examine their uses in the animal's breeding systems and scientific principles.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Demonstrate safe and humane animal handling techniques.	○	○	○	○	○
	Frequency of Use						How to Include				
Important	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Identify and compare the operation of equipment and facilities involved with livestock for optimum production efficiency.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Analyze the economic impact of production agriculture on the economy.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Use observational techniques to identify healthy, quality plants.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Explain the process of photosynthesis.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Explain lawn and turf maintenance.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Identify fruits and nuts by common name.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Identify vegetables and herd by common name.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Identify floriculture crops including houseplants by common name.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Explain the importance of quality assurance of food and fiber products.	○	○	○	○	○
	Frequency of Use						How to Include				
Important	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Explain the concepts of food sanitation and safety.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Explain the ethical and cultural concerns of biotechnology in agricultural processing.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Recognize what DNA and clones mean.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Define precision farming.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Define phenotype and genotype.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Know water issues.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Know specific insect pests.	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand urban agriculture.	○	○	○	○	○

Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Understand the impacts and controversies surrounding genetically modified organisms.	○	○	○	○	○
	Frequency of Use						How to Include				
Important	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Proficiencies	Required	Elective	Workshop	Internship	Not at All
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Other:	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Other:	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Other:	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Other:	○	○	○	○	○
Yes ○ No ○	○	○	○	○	○	Other:	○	○	○	○	○

Submit Reset Form

APPENDIX D

PANEL OF EXPERTS

Panel of Experts

Mike Sowell, Ph.D.
Professor
School of Journalism & Broadcasting
Oklahoma State University

Stan Ketterer, Ph.D.
Professor
School of Journalism & Broadcasting
Oklahoma State University

Nestor Gonzales
Manager of News Bureau
OSU News Bureau
Oklahoma State University

Don Stotts
Communications Specialist
Agricultural Communications Services
Oklahoma State University

Nels Rodfeld
Editor
Outdoor Oklahoma

Rick Hoover
Editor
Stillwater Newspress Newspaper

Dale Himes
Assistant Editor
Stillwater Newspress Newspaper

APPENDIX E

INTRODUCTORY E-MAIL

Dear Agricultural Communicator:

I need your help! The faculty members at Oklahoma State University have been working to better identify skills necessary for agricultural communications graduates who pursue jobs in writing and editing. However, it has become evident that there is limited research that gets to the heart of those necessary skills. Therefore, I will be conducting a Web-based study looking at the proficiencies necessary for agricultural communications graduates in the areas of writing and editing.

Within the next couple of days you will be receiving a note at this same e-mail address containing a link to a brief survey (10-15 minutes). We would greatly appreciate it if you could take a few moments to complete the survey.

If you have any questions about this research project, please feel free to contact myself or Dr. Dwayne Cartmell at 405-744-3690.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation. Without your assistance it would be impossible to acquire this valuable information.

Sincerely,

Gina Ciuffetelli
Graduate Student
Oklahoma State University
ginarose78@hotmail.com

APPENDIX F

INVITATION E-MAILS

Dear Agricultural Communicator:

I need your help! You have knowledge about the skills necessary for an agricultural communicator to be successful in today's technological age. Your views are crucial in the helping Agricultural Communications and journalism educators to design curriculum to prepare future agricultural communicators. You are one of a limited number of agricultural communications professionals selected to participate in this study.

The primary purpose of this study is to define what disciplines and proficiencies should be included in a model curriculum for Agricultural Communications and to determine if classroom experiences can prepare students for real-world experiences. In addition, for each proficiency identified, this study will identify whether the proficiency should be taught as a required course, as an elective, as a workshop through a professional organization or not at all! Your opinions are important as only a select number of Agricultural Communications professionals were chosen for this study.

This survey will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. Please respond to the question in terms of your views and current situation. Be assured that your responses will be treated confidentially.

The survey is provided online and can be accessed by clicking the link below:

http://ccox.pt.okstate.edu/surveys/write.htm

If you have trouble accessing the online version, please email me at ginarose78@hotmail.com, and I will FAX a copy of the instrument for your completion. Your immediate response is greatly appreciated.

Thank you for taking the time from your busy schedule to complete this online questionnaire. Without your assistance it would be impossible to acquire this valuable information. If you have any questions about this research project, please feel free to contact Dr. Dwayne Cartmell or me at 405-744-0461. For additional information regarding human participation in research, contact Oklahoma State University Campus Institutional Review Board at 405-744-5700.

Sincerely,

Gina Ciuffetelli
Graduate Student
Oklahoma State University
ginarose78@hotmail.com

Dear Agricultural Communicator:

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Oklahoma State University
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APPENDIX G

REMINDER E-MAILS

Dear Agricultural Communications Professional:

Last Friday you received an e-mail from Oklahoma State University asking for your participation in a research study regarding competencies in the area of Agricultural Communications. If you have not completed the survey, please take 10-15 minutes to fill it out, you will find a link of the survey below. If you are unable to open the survey using the link provided, please e-mail ginarose78@hotmail.com, and I will be happy to send a survey via fax. If you have already completed the survey, thank you for your participation! For questions regarding the study, feel free to contact me at 405-744-5133 or Dr. Dwayne Cartmell at 405-744-0461.

http://ccox.pt.okstate.edu/surveys/write.htm

Gina Ciuffetelli, Graduate Student
Oklahoma State University

Dwayne Cartmell, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Agricultural Communications
Oklahoma State University
(405) 744-0461
dcart@okstate.edu

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Dwayne Cartmell, Ph.D.
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Oklahoma State University
(405) 744-0461
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Assistant Professor of Agricultural Communications
Oklahoma State University
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VITA

Gina Rose Ciuffetelli

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

THESIS: WRITING AND EDITING PROFICIENCIES IN AGRICULTURAL COMMUNICATIONS: FREQUENCY OF USE AND ROLE IN CURRICULUM

Major Field: Agricultural Communications

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born Ventura, California, September 3, 1978, the daughter of Mark Ciuffetelli and Luann (Hogue) Hansen.

Education: Graduated from Cushing High School, Cushing, Oklahoma, May of 1997; received Bachelor of Science in Animal Science/ Agricultural Communications from Oklahoma State University, May 2002; completed requirements for the Master of Science degree in Agricultural Communications at Oklahoma State University, May 2004.

Personal Experience: Web Designer/ Graphics intern for the Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology at Oklahoma State University, Fall 2002; Graphics Coordinator/Staff Writer for the Cowboy Journal, Oklahoma State University, Fall 2002; Freelance Communications Specialist for Hope Paint & Quarter Horses and Sanderson Cutting Horses, Ripley, Oklahoma, 6/2000–6/2002.

Name: Gina Rose Ciuffetelli Date of Degree: May 2004

Institution: Oklahoma State University Location: Stillwater, Oklahoma

Title of Study: WRITING AND EDITING PROFICIENCES IN AGRICULTURAL COMMUNICATIONS: FREQUENCY OF USE AND ROLE IN CURRICULUM

Pages in Study: 158 Candidate for the Degree of Master of Science

Major Field: Agricultural Communications

Scope and Method of Study: The purpose of this study was to determine the proficiencies writing and editing professionals perceive as important, the frequency they use these proficiencies and how these proficiencies should be taught to students pursuing careers as professional writers or editors. A census was taken of randomly selected members of the Livestock Publications Council (n=129), American Agricultural Editors Association (n=131) and the American Horse Publications (n=127). The population included a total of 387 individuals. The group was representative of agricultural writers and editors in the United States. A web-based survey was used to gather the data. Descriptive statistics were collected with the Web-based survey and used to help establish statistics such as frequencies, means, and percentages for each of the proficiencies.

Findings and Conclusions: This study confirmed the proficiencies are perceived to be important and used by the modern agricultural writer/editor. Agricultural proficiencies were perceived as not as important by professionals when compared to the general communication and specific writing and editing proficiencies. While the technical agriculture proficiencies were perceived as important, respondents felt they should be taught as electives in a broad format. A majority of professionals used the communications and writing/editing proficiencies on a daily basis and that those proficiencies should be included as required courses in undergraduate agricultural communications curriculum. The areas within communications that were perceived important by respondents include: writing mechanics, word processing, human relations, ethics, time management skills, and photography.

Dwayne Cartmell

ADVISER'S APPROVAL: _____