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Self-Study Report: 06 Graduate Academic Programs

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Section 6:

Graduate Academic Programs

INTRODUCTION

Merging the departments of Agricultural Communications and Agricultural Education provided fresh perspectives on graduate education. While Agricultural Communications had no graduate program, Agricultural Education traditionally offered one graduate program at the masters level largely designed for agricultural educators in Nebraska's public schools. During the last five years, the program of study leading to the Master of Science degree in Agricultural Education has begun to reflect the changing nature of our clientele, their needs, and new directions.

Candidates for the master of science degree now include greater numbers of those with interests in human resources development who are pursuing careers in agribusiness, cooperative extension, government, or postsecondary teaching. In the past those seeking advanced degrees were predominantly white, male teachers in public school agricultural education. Today, more female, more international, and more racially diverse students are enrolling in programs of study in agricultural education.

The foundations of the emerging graduate program lie in the realm of procedural knowledge. Students in the graduate program, working with members of the graduate faculty, are doing advanced study in the processes of leadership, teaching and learning, and communication. We study to discover not only what the processes are, but how to apply theory in actual contexts; evaluate the application; and improve the practices of how we teach and students learn, how we lead, and how we communicate.

DEGREE STRUCTURE

The department has continued to confer a degree of Master of Science in Agricultural Education, but the graduate program associated with the integrated department is much broader than this title would convey. Considerable progress has been made in recent years in developing a minor/emphasis area in college teaching and a proposal for a graduate-level course in leadership development (proposed as ALEC 942). The current M.S. in Agricultural Education program umbrella for existing options no longer encompasses the department's broader mission. Program expansion in the areas of communication, leadership, extension, and distance and outreach education are worthy of concentrated effort at both the M.S. and Ph.D. levels. Therefore, in May 1996, graduate faculty in AgLEC voted to change the name of the master's program to *Leadership Education*. Under this master of science degree are seven areas of specialization:

- agricultural education
- extension education
- international education (in hiatus, but exploring potential for revival)
- distance and outreach education (being developed)
- environmental communication (being developed)
- leadership and organizational development (being developed)
- postsecondary (college) teaching (minor)

Tables 6.1 and 6.2 list graduate course offerings.

Table 6.1 Current AgLEC Graduate Course Offerings

Number	Course Title	Semesters Offered
804	Problems of Beginning Vocational Agriculture Teachers	Spring
805	Advanced Teaching Strategies	Fall, Spring, Summer
807	Occupational Experience Programs	Summer
812	Multimedia Applications for Education and Training	Spring
826	Program Evaluation in Vocational and Adult Education and Training (cross-listed as VAED 826)	Spring
832	Administration of Agricultural Agencies and Organizations (proposed title change to <i>Organizational Development</i>)	Fall
833	Planning and Implementation of Cooperative Extension Programs for Domestic and Foreign Audiences	Spring
845	Research in Occupational Education	Various
890 A,B,C..	Workshop Seminars in Education	Summer
893	Technical Agricultural Workshops	Summer
896	Independent Study in Agricultural Education	Various
899	Masters Thesis	Various
901	Supervision and Administration in Vocational Education	Fall
904	Seminar in Vocational Education	Various
905	In-service Preparation for Occupational and Adult Educators (proposed title change to <i>Practicum in Postsecondary Teaching</i>)	Various
908	Organization of the Agricultural Mechanics Program	Summer
996	Research Other Than Thesis	Various
999	Doctoral Dissertation	Various

Table 6.2 Courses Listed in the Graduate Bulletin but not Recently Offered

Course number	Course title
806	Continuing Education in Agriculture (to be revised and retitled <i>Distance Learning Environments</i>)
815	Development and Organization of Vocational Education
820	Improvement of Instructional Programs for Post-High School Occupational Education
903	Teacher Education in Agriculture (to be revised and retitled <i>Theoretical Foundations of Distance Learning</i>)
913	Program Development in Occupational Education (to be revised and retitled <i>Organization and Management of Distance Learning Programs</i>)

PROGRAM GOALS AND RATIONALE

To meet the needs of a changing clientele, we must strengthen the graduate program and provide expanded opportunities for our faculty to teach and advise graduate students at both the masters and doctoral levels. Goals for the graduate program in AgLEC can be grouped into three majors areas. Under each area are supporting goals and rationale listed in priority of importance to achieve these ends.

Area One. Offer a program of study in leadership education, with specializations in agricultural education, leadership development, distance and outreach education and postsecondary teaching (minor) at the masters level, and as an area of specialization at the doctoral level.

Goal 1. Design curriculum tracks for each specialization, revitalizing courses to meet new needs.

Rationale. Currently students may pursue any of three areas of emphasis (leadership, teaching/learning, extension) in the program, but emphasis areas are not officially recognized on the student's transcript. Therefore, we propose to replace emphasis areas with specializations that are officially recognized on transcripts and are more rigorous in requirements. Specializations being considered are: agricultural education and extension education; leadership; postsecondary (college) teaching; environmental communication; and distance education.

Several old course numbers have been or are being revised with new names and descriptions (ALEC 833, Organizational Development; ALEC 806, Distance Learning Environments; ALEC 812, Multimedia Applications for Education and Training; ALEC 903, Theoretical Foundations of Distance Learning; ALEC 905, Practicum for Teaching in Postsecondary Settings; ALEC 913, Organization and Management of Distance Learning Programs). Another course in leadership development (ALEC 942) is in a proposal stage. All graduate courses and their status are listed in Tables 6.1 and 6.2 on the previous two pages.

Goal 2. Strengthen the faculty for the graduate program.

Rationale. Course and programmatic development supported by research and scholarly activities will provide the faculty with greater professional opportunities at the graduate level. These opportunities will serve as avenues for development toward graduate fellow status.

A crucial component to strengthening and broadening our graduate program is a resurgence of quality research activity and funding by our graduate faculty. As the Graduate Committee explores offering an interdisciplinary Ph.D., parallel efforts will need to be made by faculty members to move from graduate member to graduate fellow status. To attain graduate college faculty fellow status, the traditional criterion of publication is the primary standard. Faculty members, therefore, need the opportunity to engage in substantial scholarly activity either through Agricultural Research Division appointments or by advising graduate research.

Goal 3. Build excellence in the graduate faculty by encouraging faculty development and rewarding activities leading to excellence in teaching and advising at the graduate level.

Rationale. This department has historically been a leader in instruction in the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (CASNR) and the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources (IANR), having thrice been UNL's nominee for the university system-wide Award for the Outstanding Teaching Department. Other departments have looked to us for guidance in the area of pedagogy as it reflects current theory and practice. We have developed evaluation systems that have served as models at other institutions for evaluating and encouraging good instruction through an adequate reward system. The models include looking at ways that provide a positive climate for innovative risk taking, peer review, and classroom research that results in teaching improvement and increased student learning.

Goal 4. Explore, build, and strengthen interdisciplinary relationships with departments across UNL, especially those in Teachers College (including Curriculum and Instruction, Educational Administration, and Vocational and Adult Education), with IANR units, and with other units, such as the Division of Continuing Studies.

Rationale. Given the economic realities of higher education in the 21st century, more efficient use of resources will be mandatory, and we will need to pay greater attention to interdisciplinary participation and collaboration. Efforts to explore and develop existing and potential opportunities for cooperation and non-duplication of offerings will be necessary. Further attention will be given to opportunities for cross-listing courses and developing new courses in collaboration with other units, especially for the distance education specialization.

Goal 5. Provide instruction in using new instructional technologies for course delivery.

Rationale. IANR and the university have made a commitment to distance education. This department has been identified to take a lead role in distance education implementation in IANR. Resources have followed that commitment and have resulted in two faculty members joining

AgLEC whose primary responsibilities are in distance education course development, teaching, and research. The East Campus Multi-Media Center located on the third floor of Ag Hall will support the development of instructional materials and will enhance the quality of delivery of courses via distance, as well as instruction in the principles and practices of distance education. The department's Distance Education Committee has been leading the effort to develop an area of specialization in distance and outreach education at the masters level. Several committee members also serve on the Graduate Committee to facilitate the effort.

Goal 6. *Offer an advanced degree program in a viable combination of on- and off-campus course work, evaluating and using the technologies of distance learning whenever feasible.*

Rationale. Our graduate courses provide modeling and instruction in the use of technologies by our students and IANR faculty. The service delivery platform is changing to include expanded uses of new technologies and our faculty must adapt accordingly. These expanded uses result in faculty challenges in the area of facilities and technological update. Several graduate faculty members are incorporating multi-media strategies and electronic communication (e.g., e-mail, WWW) into their graduate courses, and ALEC 805 and ALEC 826 are currently being taught using distance technology. Plans are underway to use distance technology to deliver more graduate courses so students would eventually be able to complete a major portion of their Masters program without coming to campus.

Goal 7. *Change the name of the graduate program.*

Rationale. The current name of the masters program — Agricultural Education — does not accurately reflect either the department's mission or current needs and trends in the field. The graduate faculty has unanimously voted to change the name of the masters degree to *Leadership Education*. The proposed name change will need to move through appropriate university committees, a process that is projected to take six months.

<p>Area Two. Identify and serve potential students or “clients” for advanced programs of study in leadership education, help them meet their needs, and expand their career opportunities.</p>

Goal 1. *Increase the number of graduates served by the masters program.*

Rationale. We anticipate a continuing demand for graduates of our program and expect to vigorously market our program internationally and have made commitments in this direction. This past summer one graduate faculty member traveled to Turkey, meeting with officials and potential graduate students to promote the AgLEC graduate program. We intend to increase graduate enrollment (with a target of 50).

Goal 2. *Coordinate with the Graduate College a complete system of student academic services that will assist potential and enrolled students to successfully meet all their requirements.*

Rationale. While individual graduate advising efforts are strong, departmentally a more systematic advising approach would serve to further strengthen the graduate program. This

approach would integrate a variety of efforts to improve recruiting, tracking, networking, and retention. We believe it would ultimately lead to moving students through in cohort groups, both on and off campus. Programmatically, it would stabilize the graduate course enrollments and, from the student perspective, it would allow the development of a community of peers.

Goal 3. *Identify and inform potential clients through a systematic and pro-active marketing of graduate courses and programs.*

Rationale. Concerted efforts are being made to market the AgLEC graduate program. AgLEC has established a World Wide Web site (<http://ianrwww.unl.edu/ianr/aglec/>) that allows potential graduate students to find information about the degree program, courses, and faculty. A review of documents that inform and guide graduate students and advisors resulted in a commitment by the graduate committee to update the graduate handbook and other program literature.

Goal 4. *Increase support for graduate assistants and assistant instructors.*

Rationale. A review of graduate student stipends across peer institutions indicates we are at the low end of the range with a \$7,912 annual stipend for a .50 appointment. For 1996-97 state funds were only available to support two .40 FTE appointments. (The high end of the range is \$14,400.) Increasing the stipend to at least the mid-point (\$11,156) would enhance the likelihood that we would be able to attract students from more diverse geographic areas and backgrounds. Current low state funding for graduate assistantships limits the number to only two assistants. This is inadequate for building a graduate program.

Area Three. Establish an interdisciplinary Ph.D. program.

Rationale. We do not have a doctorate program in our department; therefore, students who wish to study with us at the Ph.D. level must be admitted to a doctoral program in Teachers College in either Community and Human Resources (CHR) — an interdepartmental program — or Administration and Curriculum and Instruction (ACI). Although these two programs provide an outlet for our students, CHR and ACI programs have their disadvantages. Students wishing to study with us would prefer to have a degree conferred by the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources rather than by Teachers College. Administratively, it is difficult to promote and advise in a program in another college.

BASIC PROGRAM AND CURRICULUM DATA

Current enrollment in the masters program is 27; the current number of advisees at the doctoral level is six. The following tables summarize five-year data for AgLEC's graduate program. In some cases data from the Office of Institutional Research and Planning reflect numbers for fall semesters only. Specific courses may not be listed because they are not offered in the fall.

Table 6.3 Number of Graduate Class Registrations, Student Credit Hours and Student Contact Hours, Fall Semester 1991-92 to 1995-96

Year	No. of Registrants	Credit Hours	Contact Hours
1991-92*	31	92	93
1992-93	25	76	49
1993-94	29	85	71
1994-95	29	88	84
1995-96	34	103	103
% change from 1991-92 to 1995-96	9.7	12.0	10.8
% change from 1994-95 to 1995-96	17.2	17.0	22.6

Source: Office of Institutional Research and Planning

*Figures from 1991-92 reflect graduate courses in the Department of Agricultural Education; no graduate courses were taught in the Department of Agricultural Communications.

Table 6.4 Graduate Student Credit Hours per FTE Instructional Faculty by Level, Fall Semester 1990-91 to 1994-95

Year	FTE Instr. Faculty	SCH	SCH/FTE
1990-91*	0.91	126	138.5
1991-92*	0.63	92	146.0
1992-93	0.74	76	102.7
1993-94	0.96	85	88.5
1994-95	1.36	88	64.7
% change from 1993-94 to 1994-95	41.7	3.5	(0.26)

Source: Office of Institutional Research and Planning; data not available for 1995-96.

*Figures from 1990-92 reflect graduate courses in Department of Agricultural Education; no graduate courses were taught in the Department of Agricultural Communications.

Table 6.5 Student Credit Hours by Course Level, Fall Semesters 1990-91 through 1994-95

Fall Semester	800 Level	900 Level	Total
1990-91	117	51	168
1991-92	80	45	125
1992-93	64	49	113
1993-94	48	43	91
1994-95	52	39	91
% change from 1990-91 to 1994-95			(45.83)
% change from 1993-94 to 1994-95			0

Source: Office of Institutional Research and Planning; data not available for 1995-96.

Table 6.6 Number of Course Sections, Registrations, Average Class Size, Student Credit Hours, Fall Semesters 1991-92 and 1995-96.

Course Number	Fall 1991-92				Fall 1995-96			
	# of Sections	Registrations	Average Class Size	Student Credit Hours	# of Sections	Registrations	Average Class Size	Student Credit Hours
805	1	11	11	33	1	12	12	36
832	1	1	1	3	1	6	6	18
845	1	9	9	27	—	—	—	—
890	1	2	2	5	—	—	—	—
896	1	2	2	3	1	3	3	7
899	—	—	—	—	1	3	3	12
901	—	—	—	—	1	7	7	21
904	1	3	3	9	—	—	—	—
905	—	—	—	—	1	2	2	6
996	1	1	1	6	—	—	—	—
999	1	2	2	6	1	1	1	3
Total	8	31	4	92	7	34	5	103

Source: Office of Institutional Research and Planning

Table 6.7 Number of Masters Degrees Awarded, 1991 through 1996

Year	Number of Degrees
1991-92	2
1992-93	3
1993-94	5
1994-95	2
1995-96	3
% change from 1991-92 to 1995-96	50.0
% change from 1994-95 to 1995-96	50.0

Source: Office of Institutional Research and Planning

FACULTY RESPONSIBILITIES AND INTERRELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER UNITS

Current teaching responsibilities of the AgLEC graduate faculty are listed in Table 6.8.

Table 6.8 Teaching Responsibilities of AgLEC Graduate Faculty

Course Number	Graduate Course Title	Faculty Member Who Teaches the Course
804	Problems of Beginning Vocational Agriculture Teachers	Bell
805	Advanced Teaching Methods	Lunde
807	Occupational Experience Program	Staff
812	Multimedia Applications for Education and Training	Parsons
826/VAED 826	Program Evaluation in Vocational and Adult Education and Training	Rockwell
832	Administration of Agricultural Organizations	Brown
833	Planning and Implementation of Cooperative Extension Programs for Domestic and Foreign Audiences	Wheeler and Vitzthum
845	Research in Occupational Education	Brown
890 A,B,C ...	Workshop Seminars in Education	Staff
893	Technical Agricultural Workshops	Staff
896	Independent Study in Agricultural Education	Staff
899	Masters Thesis	Staff

Course Number	Graduate Course Title	Faculty Member Who Teaches the Course
901	Supervision and Administration in Vocational Education	Barrett
904	Seminar in Vocational Education	Barrett
905	In-service Preparation for Occupational and Adult Educators	Lunde/Fritz/Barrett
908	Organization of the Agricultural Mechanics Program	Silletto
996	Research Other Than Thesis	Staff
999	Doctoral Dissertation	Barrett/Brown

It is anticipated that interrelationships among units will increase as the program in graduate studies expands. Already the college teaching minor attracts students from other departments. We anticipate that the new specialization in distance and outreach education and the interdisciplinary Ph.D. and specialization will not only increase cross-unit cooperation with traditionally affiliated units (Curriculum and Instruction, Educational Administration, Division of Continuing Studies, Vocational and Adult Education) but also increase relationships with units with which our program was not previously associated.

Currently linkages exist with a number of other units within the university. These include:

- Center for the Study of Higher Education and Post-Secondary Education
- Office of Professional and Organizational Development
- Teaching and Learning Center
- Multi-Media Centers
- IANR departments
- Center for Leadership Development
- Teachers College.

Table 6.9 on the next page lists AgLEC graduate faculty with courtesy appointments in other departments or with joint appointments.

Table 6.9 AgLEC Graduate Faculty with Courtesy or Joint Appointments

Name	Home Department	Courtesy Appointment Department	Joint Department Appointments
Leverne Barrett	AgLEC	Vocational and Adult Education; Educational Administration; Office of Professional and Organizational Development	
Lloyd Bell	AgLEC	Vocational and Adult Education	
Allen Blezek	AgLEC	Vocational and Adult Education	Center for Leadership Development and Nebraska LEAD Program (100%)
Bill Brown	AgLEC	Curriculum and Instruction; Educational Administration; Vocational and Adult Education; Office of Professional and Organizational Development	
Susan Fritz	AgLEC	Vocational and Adult Education	Center for Leadership Development - Nebraska Human Resources Institute (20%)
Ozzie Gilbertson	AgLEC	Vocational and Adult Education	
Joyce Povlacs Lunde	AgLEC		Office of Professional and Organizational Development (33%)
Kay Rockwell	AgLEC		Vocational and Adult Education (7%)
Tom Silletto	Biological Systems Engineering		AgLEC (20%)
Charles Stonecipher	AgLEC		Cooperative Extension District Office (100%)
Dan Wheeler	Cooperative Extension Division	AgLEC; Educational Administration; and Vocational and Adult Education	Office of Professional and Organizational Development (100%)

STUDENTS

Table 6.10 1990-96 Masters of Science and Ph.D. Graduates (most recent listed first)

Graduate Student	Degree	Year	Advisor	Occupation
Brian Bosshamer	MS	1996	Leverne Barrett	Extension Educator
Tim Kock	MS	1996	Leverne Barrett	Meat Laboratory Technician
Tony Tvrdy	MS	1995	Leverne Barrett	District Sales Representative — AGRO Seeds
Dan Tvrdy	MS	1995	Roy Dillon	Industry Trainer
Mitch Mason	MS	1995	Bill Brown	Extension Educator
Samuel Mutfwang	Ph.D.	1994	Leverne Barrett	International Mission Service
Larry Andelt	Ph.D.	1994	Leverne Barrett	Coordinator, Prison Training
Tim Laughlin	MS	1994	Leverne Barrett	Ag Educator
Steve Neimeyer	MS	1993	Leverne Barrett	Extension Assistant
Mark McCaslin	Ph.D.	1993	Leverne Barrett	Extension Educator
Linda Moody	MS	1993	Rick Foster	University Instructor
Sultana Al-Falih	MS	1993	Roy Dillon	High School Teacher
Lee Saylor	MS	1992	Leverne Barrett	Ag Educator
Susan Fritz	Ph.D.	1992	Allen Blezek	University Professor
Jan Kimmons	Ph.D.	1991	Leverne Barrett	University Professor
Dann Husmann	Ph.D.	1991	Rick Foster	University Professor
Peter Koontz	Ph.D.	1991	Allen Blezek	Human Resource Development Trainer
Maria Louisa Nagel	Ph.D.	1991	Allen Blezek	Medical Technologist
Carole Pfeifer Winscott	Ph.D.	1991	Allen Blezek	Nursing Educator
Craig Frederick	MS	1991	Allen Blezek	Ag Educator
Ronald Witt	Ed.D.	1991	Allen Blezek	Administrator
Noel Erskine	MS	1990	Rick Foster	Ag Educator

Table 6.11 Masters-level Graduate Students by Race, Full and Part Time Status, and Gender (as of Summer, 1996)

Category	Number
Race:	
White/Non-Hispanic	19
Black/Non-Hispanic	4
Asian/Pacific Islander	3
Middle Eastern	1
Total	27
Status:	
Part-Time	15
Full-Time	12
Total	27
Gender:	
Male	18
Female	9
Total	27

Table 6.12 Agricultural Education Masters Candidates 1996-97

Student Name	Advisor
Shirley Andelt	Barrett
Joseph Awotunde	Barrett
Christopher Chinwadzimba	Barrett
Sirot Chutiwat	Barrett
Tracy Cooper	Barrett
Robert Eirich	Rockwell
Gary Elston	Barrett
Ahmet Engiz	Russell
Dean Folkers	Barrett
Shelly Goodwater	Brown
Thomas Hofmann	Barrett
Rodney Howe	Brown
Zane Johnson	Fritz
Robert Meduna	Barrett
Elizabeth Milroy	Barrett
Jolene Schauer	Fritz

Student Name	Advisor
Mark Simmons	Brown
Huang Song	Parsons
Daniel Stehlik	Gilbertson
Marshall Streit	Fritz
Corey Sundberg	Bell
Douglas Swanson	Brown
Chanda Square	Barrett
Gary Troester	Rockwell
Zhigang Wang	Wheeler
Cal Williams	Barrett
Stephen Zimmers	Barrett

Table 6.13 Doctoral Candidates 1996-97

Student	Degree Area	Advisor
Mark Cheraghali	CHR	Barrett
Betsy Dierberger	CHR	Brown/Barrett
John Eggers	CHR	Barrett
Frank Jabati	CHR	Barrett
Joel McCleary	CHR	Barrett
Sara Cunningham	CHR	Rockwell

CURRICULAR CHANGES

Graduate study changes since the 1990 Agricultural Education self-study review are noted below, as well as changes currently in progress.

- Change of name of graduate program to *leadership education*
- Creation of a doctoral level specialization in leadership development
- Development of a specialization in distance and outreach education
- Development of a minor in college teaching which can be elected by CASNR graduate students in other majors or taken as a tool on the doctoral level

Table 6.14 summarizes proposed and approved course changes.

Table 6.14 Course Changes in the Graduate Program since 1990 Review

Course Number	1990 Title and Course Description	1996 Title and Course Description (Proposed or Approved)
805	<i>Advanced Teaching Methods in Occupational Education</i> , 1-3 cr. Innovative approaches to teaching, motivating students, developing interests, attitudes, and abilities; lesson planning, new and advanced classroom techniques and procedures.	<i>Advanced Teaching Strategies</i> , 3 cr. A variety of contemporary and innovative teaching strategies, emphasizing learner-centered instruction, suitable to teaching in college and postsecondary institutions, outreach programs, public schools, and other settings. Students will participate in active learning as they explore ways of moving theory into practice, prepare and demonstrate teaching methods, and plan for instruction in discipline areas of their choice (cross-listed with Vocational and Adult Education). (AgLEC faculty approved)
812	<i>Instructional Materials in Occupational Education</i> , 2-3 cr. Philosophy, objectives, and methods of developing a sound program of teaching aids. Materials available, practice in constructing and assembling such teaching aids as pictures, charts, graphs, drawings, and models. Determining educational adaption of resource materials found in local schools, communities, farms and businesses. Lect.	<i>Multimedia Applications for Education and Training</i> , 3 cr. Practical applications in developing and evaluating multimedia resources for students. Course will survey new applications, create and develop various platforms and address instructional issues. Projects will use software packages to develop instructional materials for various audiences. (CASNR approved)
826		<i>Program Evaluation in Vocational and Adult Education and Training</i> , 3 cr. The course builds upon program development in adult and continuing education and provides a basic overview of program evaluation principles and methods. Major emphasis is on applying the program evaluation principles in adult education entities and training situations (cross-listed with Vocational and Adult Education).
832	<i>Administration of Agricultural Agencies and Organizations</i> , 3 cr. The purpose of this course is to have participants acquire knowledge of rational processes which can contribute to the effective administration of agricultural agencies and organizations and to acquire or increase participants' skill in applying that knowledge in a practical manner. Students will be exposed to administrative-management theory and research, and see how this applies to real life situations. This course applies to agencies in both the domestic and international settings.	<i>Administration of Agricultural Agencies and Organizations</i> , 3 cr. (Proposed title revision: <i>Organizational Development</i>) Administrative-management theory and practice, research and techniques applied to agricultural agencies and organizations. Exposure to philosophies and experiences of outstanding administrators. Applicable to domestic and international students. (Pending)

Course Number	1990 Title and Course Description	1996 Title and Course Description (Proposed or Approved)
905	<i>In-Service Preparation for Occupational and Adult Education</i> , 3 cr., C& I and V&AE. Identifying and solving problems in program planning, methodology, department operation, and school and community relationships. Primarily to aid beginning occupational and adult teachers in planning and establishing effective programs. Workshop on campus, followed by four small group meetings during the year and two days of individual instruction in the local department, in addition to student assignments.	<i>Practicum in Postsecondary Teaching</i> , 1-3 cr. Work with a mentor in the discipline and an instructional supervisor to prepare instruction and teach students in a postsecondary setting. Practicum students receive assistance in arranging for the practicum in the discipline of their choice, and are provided consultation and feedback during the practicum (AgLEC faculty approved).
---		999 <i>Doctoral Dissertation</i> (1996-1998 bulletin)

Note: Courses cross-listed in AgLEC, but offered by the departments of Vocational and Adult Education and Curriculum and Instruction, also reflect some changes made by these respective departments. These courses are not reviewed here (exception: ALEC 826). See graduate catalogue for old course descriptions.

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Areas in Which the Program Excels

AgLEC has in place a recognized and well-established Master of Science degree in Agricultural Education directed and taught by a team of highly qualified faculty working collaboratively.

The AgLEC graduate faculty have been recognized for their teaching and advising excellence. AgLEC was runner-up for the university-wide Outstanding Departmental Teaching Award in 1993, 1994, and 1995. The department is the academic home of Joyce Povlacs Lunde, 1994 winner of the Distinguished Teaching Award, and Leverne Barrett, Charter Member of the Academy of Distinguished University Teachers. Recently graduate faculty members Gerald Parsons and Susan Fritz were selected as one of six UNL faculty pairs to participate in the Peer Review of Teaching Program. On a Likert scale of 1- 4, the five year departmental average for graduate student course evaluations is 3.6, higher than the CASNR average of 3.2.

This past year the number of faculty members associated with the graduate program in AgLEC has increased. Dan Wheeler, who is a graduate fellow, has joined the department through a courtesy appointment. Gerald Parsons joined the graduate faculty as a member and Earl Russell joined as a graduate fellow. Kay Rockwell, who joined the department in July 1996, is a graduate fellow, and Jim King and Ed Vitzthum will be applying for graduate faculty membership.

Areas in Which the Program Needs Improvement

The following issues are set forth as problem statements and are also target areas for change, improvement, or renewed negotiation.

- *Maintenance of program integrity.* One issue is knowing how to maintain a balance between the old and the new as we move from a traditional, more narrowly defined curriculum in agricultural education to a broader program of study to be designated *Leadership Education*. A number of courses, including ALEC 805, 812, 832, 833, and 905, have undergone recent revisions. New courses in evaluation (ALEC/VAED 826) and leadership (ALEC 942) have been or are being developed. Courses in distance education are also being developed as revisions of courses no longer viable (e.g., ALEC 806, 903, 913). However, we still need to revise others, especially those that have not been offered recently or have been offered to a more narrowly targeted audience. The potential for bringing communication study into the graduate program is not yet realized. We need to revise courses to integrate the processes held in common in teaching and learning, leadership, and communication. At the same time, we must preserve the essential pieces of the older curriculum without constraining the new.
- *Recruitment and support of graduate students.* We need to solve the problem of marketing the graduate program to wider audiences, locally, nationally and internationally. The graduate program is not now being marketed adequately and has been slow to change focus from traditional agricultural education teachers to a broader client base. We believe we have a unique combination of course work and practice in applied human resources education, but we need to identify potential clients more precisely and link them to programmatic resources and curricula, not only in agricultural education but also in broader areas of leadership, postsecondary education, and distance and outreach education. Far too few graduate assistantships are currently available, and the ones we do have are woefully underfunded. Another problem is the need to keep track of graduate students, individually and collectively, going beyond earning the degree to the careers they ultimately pursue.
- *Cooperation with other units.* We need to expand our cooperation with other units in offering the graduate program. In the past, the graduate program in AgLEC has largely rested on cooperation with Teachers College, especially in cross-listed courses and participation in the Community and Human Resources doctoral program in the Department of Vocational and Adult Education. In the future, AgLEC programs of study will rely even more heavily on cooperation among a number of units. The courtesy and joint appointments held by faculty have facilitated building cooperative relationships with other units. However, issues of control of graduate courses, scheduling and cross-listing of courses, and program requirements need renegotiation. Common goals, interests, and resources, especially with the Department of Vocational and Adult Education, need to be further defined.
- *Faculty staffing.* Another issue is the question of staffing graduate courses needed in the emerging program of study, particularly in light of the proposed doctoral specialization and new doctoral program. The department now has six graduate college faculty fellows and 6 members; not all are full-time members of the department. Furthermore, almost all graduate

faculty members teach substantial loads in the undergraduate curriculum or have other non-graduate responsibilities.

- *Faculty time and development.* In addition to staffing needs, time for curriculum and faculty development is in short supply. Development and shepherding of proposals for new specializations are time consuming. Graduate faculty have not been given release time, in most cases, to put together the materials and follow them through the system. Progress in this area has been intermittent and sometimes even fragmented. If the department moves toward delivering more of the graduate program, including the masters program, via distance methods, graduate faculty need to learn how to use new technologies — television, computers, software programs — for teaching in new modalities.

Strategies for Improvement

Strategies to remedy program needs and address issues are already being put in place. Strategies for improvement include:

- *Curriculum renewal.* The department has become more aware of its leadership role in the areas of agricultural education, leadership development, distance and outreach education, and college teaching. The process of reviewing and renewing the current graduate curriculum to prepare for a diverse clientele continues, with full cooperation of AgLEC faculty across their specialties in education, leadership, and communication. The broadening will further occur with the delivery of the courses via distance methods, the creation of specializations, change of the program name from *Agricultural Education* to *Leadership Education*, increased graduate assistantships and stipends, revision of all promotional materials, and development of web pages that will include updated graduate program information.
- *Interdisciplinary doctoral program.* An immediate strategy is to work toward a doctoral program as a specialization in another department. Shorter term strategies include changing the name of the graduate master of science degree to *Leadership Education*, assessing needs, continuing to revise courses, building expertise within the faculty, and negotiating with partner departments. Once a specialization is in place, we will move toward the goal of establishing an interdisciplinary doctoral program.
- *Graduate student recruitment, retention, tracking.* We will continue to increase numbers of students enrolling in programs of study in AgLEC. Increasing the number of majors will facilitate the creation of cohort groups, in residence or off-site, that can move through the program together. The changes proposed in marketing and methods of delivery as mentioned above should help increase enrollments. New programs, such as college teaching, offered partially off-campus via distance, the increased interest from foreign nationals (Turkey, China) and other major changes underway should positively affect enrollments.

Graduate faculty members have acknowledged the void in graduate recruitment efforts and have begun to address this problem through the development and redesign of promotional

materials (including web sites), international contacts, and heightened awareness of the need to provide competitive graduate assistant stipends. Dialogue within the department has also begun regarding the replacement of some instructorships with an increased number of graduate teaching assistantships, provided due care is given to maintaining high quality undergraduate instruction. If total dollars for research-based projects funded externally or internally could be increased, the amount of stipend and the number of graduate assistants could be increased. Finally, a database management program will be instituted to assist in tracking students from admissions and enrollment through degrees to careers.

Cooperative alliances. Members of the graduate faculty have actively sought courtesy and joint appointments, where appropriate, that allow for cross-listing of courses and a wider graduate student clientele base. In addition, negotiations to discover common ground with the Department of Vocational and Adult Education and linkages with other units need to be developed in the future with IANR and other UNL units as we seek to develop an interdisciplinary doctoral program and specializations. Involvement of IANR staff in the department's distance education efforts will also enhance positive relationships with other units in IANR and in Teachers College.

Redirection of resources. In order to develop the emerging programs identified here, resources must be redirected to give faculty release time to implement massive curricular changes. Not only is time needed for course design, but also for shepherding proposals for new specializations through approval procedures through departmental, college, and university committees. In addition, resources must be increased for graduate fellowships, assistantships, and instructorships. Building the informational infra-structure needed to serve graduate students and gather feedback on programs—a system which cannot be derived from current university data banks—will also take additional faculty and staff time to put in place, monitor, and utilize. Faculty professional development support is also needed for learning new technologies and, in some cases, career redirection.