

University of Illinois Agricultural Education Strategic Vision

The vision of the Agricultural Education Program at the University of Illinois is to become the innovative leader in experiential and outreach education for traditional and non-traditional youth and adults in the agricultural, consumer and environmental sciences. We envision the following action steps be taken to become globally preeminent and locally relevant.

1. Educate and train future practitioners, scholars and leaders for success in institutions, organizations and communities. Graduates will be prepared for careers in:
 - a. Agricultural Sciences Education
 - b. Teacher Education
 - c. Instructional Design and Evaluation
 - d. Organizational Consulting
 - e. Community Development and Outreach

2. Revise the curriculum to reflect the new vision. Revisions should include but are not limited to:
 - a. A defined plan of action for teacher certification students to pursue a second endorsement (i.e. science, math, or business education).
 - b. Quality internships for leadership education students with the same rigor and relevance as the student teaching internship.
 - c. Teacher Certification technical courses that reflect the Illinois career pathways.
 - i. Horticulture & Plant Science
 - ii. Animal & Food Science
 - iii. Natural Resources & Environmental Science
 - iv. Technical Systems Management
 - v. Agricultural Business Management
 - d. Leadership Education technical courses that reflect educational and organizational contexts of the agricultural, consumer and environmental sciences.
 - i. Introductory Content (ACE, FSHN, HORT, TSM, ANSC)
 - ii. Human Resource Education
 - iii. Educational Psychology
 - e. Course requirements that reflect current professional standards (e.g., multicultural education, organizational communication, educational technology, community outreach, collaborations, reflection and professional development, and experiential education).
 - f. Graduate and undergraduate courses that reflect the body of knowledge in agricultural sciences and leadership education.
 - i. Needs Assessments & Evaluation
 - ii. Program Development
 - iii. Teaching and Training Strategies
 - iv. Experiential and Inquiry-based Learning
 - v. Human Capital Development

3. Develop an undergraduate fellowship program that will identify high achieving high school students, recruit them into agricultural education, provide substantive financial support toward a degree in agricultural education, and establish a professional development program from matriculation through the first four years of teaching agriculture that focuses on growth and retention.

4. Articulate courses with community colleges and build relationships that help foster a smooth transition for transfer students.
5. Develop a strategic plan to recruit quality students who are diverse in their interests, devoted to life-long learning, and dedicated to educating others about the agricultural, consumer and environmental sciences.
6. Create an advisory committee that meets twice a year to assess the progress and relevance of the program. Stakeholders should represent agriculture, consumer and environmental sciences education, broadly.
7. Provide professional development opportunities for undergraduates that include real-life teaching/training experiences, educational research internships, program development experiences, and collaborations with educational and organizational stakeholders.
8. Deliver high quality academic programs for graduate students interested in experiential and outreach education in the agricultural, consumer and environmental sciences. The graduate programs that shall be offered are:
 - a. M.S. in Ag Ed (Thesis or Special Project)
 - b. M.S. in Ag Ed (Teacher Certification)
 - c. M.S. in Ag Ed (Online)
 - d. Ph.D. (To be Developed)
9. Provide continuing education opportunities for practitioners. Special areas of interest are:
 - a. Professional Development in content areas
 - b. Certifying provisional agriculture teachers
 - c. New teacher development and mentoring
 - d. National Board Certification in Agricultural Education
10. Promote diversity and international programs and develop new partnerships with underserved populations.
11. Identify and implement administrative, structural, and programmatic changes for the Ag Ed program that will position it as a viable, credible, and relevant program in the College of ACES.
12. Develop a plan of action for tenure-track faculty concerning scholarship, grant acquisition, and promotion and tenure. This plan should be sensitive to the scholarship needs of the agricultural education discipline but rigorous enough to meet the expectations of the university.
13. Utilize academic professionals to facilitate the daily operations of the undergraduate program. Duties would include teaching courses, advising students, providing professional development opportunities for students, and maintaining records and reports for the teacher certification program.