

\* \* \* \* \*

PREPARING TEACHERS OF AGRICULTURE TO SERVE AS FFA  
ADVISORS<sup>1</sup>

Bob R. Stewart  
Assistant Professor

University of Missouri-Columbia  
Agricultural Education

The AATEA Ad Hoc Committee for the FFA was charged with determining the present status of preparation of preservice and inservice teachers of agriculture to serve as FFA advisors. It was anticipated that the information would be helpful to teacher educators in assessing the strength of this phase of the preparation program. A questionnaire was designed and mailed to the head teacher educators in all institutions preparing teacher of agriculture in the United States in September of 1971. Sixty-eight institutions returned the questionnaires for a return of 82 percent.

Table I summarized data pertaining to the number of full-time staff members in Agricultural Education, the number of programs offered, and the enrollment in these programs. Sixty-five of the 68 institutions reported a mean enrollment of 82 students in the undergraduate program. Fifty-seven institutions reported a

master's enrollment of 2,050 students with a mean enrollment of 36. At the doctoral level, 27 institutions reported 228 enrollments. The Pacific Region had only one institution reporting a doctoral level program.

TABLE 1  
NUMBERS OF STAFF AND STUDENTS IN AGRICULTURAL  
EDUCATION

	Full-Time Staff (F.T.E)			Under- graduate Students			Masters Students			Doctoral Students		
	N	Tot.	M. <sup>1</sup>	N	Tot.	M. <sup>1</sup>	N	Tot.	M. <sup>1</sup>	N	Tot.	M. <sup>1</sup>
Atlantic N = 10	10	24.20	2.42	9	319	35	9	154	17	6	55	9
Central N = 19	19	66.65	3.51	19	2088	110	17	1016	60	10	131	13
Pacific N = 9	9	22.50	2.50	7	438	63	8	189	24	1	3	3
Southern N = 30	<u>30</u>	<u>92.00</u>	<u>3.07</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>2517</u>	<u>84</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>691</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>39</u>	<u>4</u>
National	68	205.35	3.02	65	5362	82	57	2050	36	27	228	8

<sup>1</sup>M = Mean, Means rounded to nearest whole number.

The clock hours of instruction devoted to information related to the FFA was reported in Table II. Greater emphasis in instruction about the FFA is evident in the undergraduate programs. Only four institutions reported that they did not include formal instruction in this area. However, there was a marked difference between the regions, with the Atlantic Region reporting a mean of five clock hours in the Pacific Region. The range in hours of undergraduate instruction was from 0 to 50. The range at the graduate level was from 0 to 33 clock hours of instruction.

Each institution was asked to rank four variables in terms of the contribution they make in preparing teachers to serve as FFA advisors. FFA membership in high school and FFA duties related to student teaching were ranked one and two respectively. FFA instruction in college and collegiate FFA membership were ranked three and four respectively.

The respondents were asked to rate the effectiveness of their programs in terms of preparing teachers to serve as FFA advisors.

TABLE II

CLOCK HOURS OF UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE INSTRUCTION DEVOTED TO THE FFA

Region	Number of Institutions	Hours of Instruction <sup>2</sup>												Mean Hrs. of Instr. <sup>1</sup>						
		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11		12	13	14	15	16	17
Atlantic	9	0	5	5	3	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	4
Central	19 <sup>3</sup>	0	9	1	0	4	3	4	0	4	2	4	5	16 <sup>3</sup>	14					
Pacific	9	0	5	2	0	2	2	0	0	0	1	5	1	18	7					
Southern	29	4	22	3	2	6	0	6	2	1	1	9	2	15	4					
National	66	4	41	11	5	15	6	11	2	5	4	18	8	14	7					

<sup>1</sup>Rounded to nearest whole number

<sup>2</sup>U = undergraduate, G = graduate

<sup>3</sup>Two institutions did not report undergraduate hours of instructions.

Fifty-eight of 67 respondents or 86 percent indicated that their students were adequately qualified for this role.

Four schools also reported the use of student teaching centers that do not have active FFA chapters. Seventeen institutions reported anticipated changes in the program related to preparing students to serve as FFA advisors. Thirty-eight institutions have active Collegiate FFA Chapters. Of 67 reporting schools, 29 had students participating in state FFA activities while 36 had students participating in national FFA activities. And 42 of 66 reporting institutions felt they were now spending adequate time in preparing students to serve as FFA advisors.

When the data were examined by regions, the Atlantic Region had the fewest staff members per institution, smaller undergraduate enrollments, but a higher proportion of graduate programs. All institutions reported some undergraduate instruction related to the FFA, but reported a mean of 5 clock hours of instruction as compared to a national mean of 14 hours. While 80 percent of the institutions rated their students as adequately prepared to serve as FFA advisors, only 20 percent felt that adequate time was devoted to this phase of preparation program.

The institutions in the Central Region reported the largest mean number of staff members and the largest enrollments in pro-

grams at the undergraduate, masters, and doctoral levels. Only one institution reported less than five clock hours of undergraduate instruction related to the FFA and the mean number of hours was 16. Eighty-four percent of the respondents felt that their students were adequately prepared to serve as FFA advisors. However, six of the institutions were planning to change this phase of the program.

The schools in the Pacific Region reported only one doctoral level program. They also reported the highest number of hours of undergraduate instruction devoted to the FFA with a mean of 18 hours. All but one or 89 percent of the institutions rated their students as adequately prepared to assume the role of the FFA advisor. This region also had the greatest percent of respondents indicating that their students were well qualified to serve as FFA advisors. However, five of the nine schools still indicated that the time devoted to this phase of the program was not adequate and three schools were planning changes in this phase of the program.

The Southern Region had the greatest number of institutions reporting. They reported a range of from 0 to 50 clock hours devoted to undergraduate instruction. However, the mean number of hours reported was 15. Ninety percent reported that their students were adequately qualified to assume the role of the FFA advisor. Only three schools reported that they felt that their students were not adequately qualified, although four schools reported no formal instruction was devoted to the FFA. Twenty-two or 73 percent of the respondents indicated that adequate time was devoted to this phase of the program and six indicated plans to make some changes in this phase of their instructional program.

Respondents were also asked to list the specific instructional objectives related to the FFA in their courses. The responses were as follows:

#### Course Objectives Related to the FFA

1. The prospective teacher will understand the nature and function of the FFA in relation to general education and vocational agriculture.
2. To develop the ability to fully utilize the FFA, 4-H, and Young Farmers organizations in the operation of a local program of Agricultural Education.
3. To develop the ability to fully incorporate the FFA program and activities as part of the Vocational Agriculture local program.
4. To develop knowledgeable and effective advisors for FFA.
5. To develop an awareness of the scope of the organization and the type of activities.
6. To provide instruction and actual practice as FFA advisors.

### Specific Instructional Objectives Concerning the FFA

1. List the aims and purposes of the FFA and relate them to the objectives of instructional programs in Vocational Agriculture.
2. Present his philosophy of the principles and values of youth organizations in Agricultural Extension and Education.
3. Describe the history and development of the FFA.
4. Develop a program of activities for a chapter.
5. Identify and describe the duties and responsibilities of the advisor.
6. Know the names of the State FFA officers and how the State FFA Association conducts its business.
7. Be able to recite all opening and closing ceremony advisor parts of the FFA.
8. Develop a unit outline on the FFA.
9. Properly use parliamentary procedure.
10. Plan and conduct the BOAC Program.
11. Develop a file of required and optional FFA reports and award applications and be able to properly complete them.
12. Collect newspaper articles publicizing the FFA program of activities and to write an article suitable for publication.
13. List the degrees a pupil may earn and the requirements for each.
14. List the major awards available to the pupil.
15. List the titles and duties of each chapter officer.
16. Diagram and label the arrangement of the meeting room, including paraphernalia.
17. Develop a chapter budget.
18. Identify the FFA organizational structure from local to national levels.
19. Plan a parent-son banquet.

The following inferences and implications were drawn from the study:

1. To the extent that clock hours of instruction can be interpreted as an indication of program emphasis, there was a reported variance among the regions. The question can be raised regarding emphasis on the FFA in the various regions. Possibly the FFA as an organization is not meeting the needs of students and of the instructional program in certain areas of the country. Is the emphasis, or lack of same, at the college level a reflection of the emphasis given the FFA in local programs and state programs or a contributing factor to the variable emphasis?
2. The hours of instruction related to the FFA as reported by regions did not vary in proportion to the number of staff members. In fact, the regions reporting the highest and lowest hours of in-

struction reported the fewest full time staff members. However, the region reporting the fewest hours reported a greater number of doctoral programs. Perhaps the variance of time reported is not governed by manpower available but how the priorities are assigned in planning the total program.

3. The greatest emphasis on instruction related to the FFA was at the undergraduate level. However, fifteen institutions reported four or less clock hours of instruction. This would indicate the need for teacher educators in some institutions to analyze the role of the FFA in the instructional program of the high school because, no doubt, the lack of emphasis on the FFA in their programs will be reflected in the functioning of the graduates of their programs.
4. FFA activities during student teaching were perceived to contribute more to the preparation of an advisor of the FFA than instruction or activities in college. Therefore, if we are to best prepare future teachers in this area, one criteria for selecting cooperating schools must be related to the scope and quality of the FFA program in that school.
5. More institutions participated in the national FFA activities than in state FFA activities. While the reasons may vary, the data reflected that more than 50 percent of the schools do not participate in state activities, yet are preparing teachers who are expected to participate in these activities. This information would seem to indicate that institutions should explore ways to involve preservice teachers in state FFA activities.
6. The Collegiate FFA was ranked fourth of four variables as an aid in preparing future teachers to serve as FFA advisors. There were 38 Collegiate Chapters reported as functioning in the schools in this study. This seems to focus on the role and function of a collegiate chapter. Can the Collegiate FFA be related to an integral phase of the instructional program for future teachers or is the Collegiate FFA just another organization for students to join? The time has come for us to define the function of Collegiate FFA. While this study did not suggest what the role might be, the implication is made that the collegiate chapters as they now exist are not considered to be major contributors to the preparation of future FFA advisors.
7. The first three course objectives listed relate in some way to developing the ability of the future teacher to recognize the FFA as an integral part of the total instructional program in agriculture and to aid him in developing methods for utilizing the FFA in his teaching. However, only two of the specific instructional objectives are related to the role of the FFA in the instructional program. This clearly implies that teacher educators should first clearly define the role of the FFA in the instructional program and then concentrate on communicating this role to future teachers. This approach should be reflected in specific instructional objectives related to the FFA.

\* \* \* \* \*